

PRACTICAL PHILOSOPHY

**A valuable guide graphically giving a genuine
fund of information and a stream of
instruction about human life.**

By
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Affectionately dedicated to my warm-well-wisher, Sri P. S. Ramanuja Rao of Guntur District, a model for all emulation with his illustrious qualities like simplicity, sterling honesty of purpose, devotion to duty, amiability and radiant cheerfulness.

By

G. RANGA REDDY
AUTHOR

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Preface

“Just as thoughtless action and aimless life
sail adrift each standing in its own light ;
Man without character and female without fidelity .
soon fall foul seeing no part of the light.”

We who are in 'the last stage of civilisation constantly confronting us with riddle after riddle concerning either our living or lives, ought to know if how we live we make our lives worth living and ought to endeavour to make the best of our lives by making the most of our lot. Our powers which are by force of habit abjusted to a life of claims and counter claims, have to be adjusted to a life of integration and to attain the same a drastic and universal process of change is necessary. Life is what we make it and it is idle to look to the hand of Destiny and leave our lot to the winds. In the present world where the life appears most complicated and paradoxical our salvation lies in practical philosophy founded on practical wisdom shaking off the age old superstitions, impracticable religious sentiments and modern sensuous desires and passions looming large a net of entanglement encircling one and all. Man should be attracted and directed from the present beaten track or the restless rut

of his life to the one of rectitude and righteousness by disillusioning him from all illusions and making him self-reliant and duty conscious. Self-conceit and self-deceit practised in the name of religion, land us in degradation and degeneracy only. It is futile to look for any thing more than a faithful faith as the best divinity, a good life as the best religion, a clear conscience as the best law, integrity, industry and dutifulness as the best policy and temperance as the best philosophy. No body is certain of the existence of Heaven or Hell to invite after death but it is certainly in our own hands to make a heaven or hell of our lives by the way of each of us living. Our deeds determine us as much as we determine our deeds. Life reflects back the image we show to life. Plan your future so that you will have a good past. Our present malady and malaise become more and more malignant when we forget our ideals, objectives and principles and begin to wander away from the path of rectitude which alone can lead to the self-integration and peace of mind. This book holds the key to the question of how you achieve the desired end in life.

"The steeds of senses that draw the chariot of life ;
Serve you well if saddled and strained fast,
Stay stupidly sterile if strayed into mire and mirth ;
All stakes thus stand at stake staring at your Will."

—AUTHOR

FOREWORD

by

Sri P. BASI REDDY

(Formerly a Judge of the Andhra Pradesh High Court)

The author of this book seems to have an old head on young shoulders. As Professor Harold Laski used to say: Age should not be equated with wisdom nor antiquity with experience. The title of the book is: - "PRACTICAL PHILOSOPHY" and in the words of the author, the book presents "a dynamic approach to the perplexing problems of day-to-day living." One may or may not agree with all the views expressed and the ideas adumbrated by the author, but there is no gainsaying that they are thought-provoking and giving food for reflection. What the author has indicated in the book as the "Open - Sesame" to the art of living, may appear to the average man to be not so practicable but more in the realm of the ideal to be sought after. It is nevertheless something to strive for, however short of the goal one may find himself at the end of life's journey. On the whole it is a well-written and interesting treatise, and I would commend it to both young and old.

In ultimate analysis, each human being must work out his or her own salvation. Temple-going, idol-worship and religious ritual do serve some purpose but they are not ends in themselves but only means to reach the Almighty with a view to make one's life sublime. The art of living is really an unending quest to find a solution for the conflicting claims and contradictory obligations in man's life. The aim should be to lead a life full of grace, charity and compassion, tending towards fulfilment. The lure of material happiness has been found to be irresistible even by saints who, despite their mental attunement and self-discipline, have yielded to temptation in their weak moments. If that is so in the case of saints and religious men, it is much more so in the case of ordinary mortals. The desire to acquire and possess wealth is at the root of many an evil. It goads an individual to resort to unfair means to enrich himself. In this mad race, principles are sacrificed, values are debased and scruples are jettisoned. Wealth can be a curse instead of being a blessing if its possessor does not know how to make proper use of it. Charity and compassion towards the weak, the down-trodden and the less fortunate, and kindness towards all living beings, are considered to be the traits of a God-fearing and righteous man. Happiness is a will-o'-the-wisp and its pursuit a wild goose chase. Equipoise and contentment alone give

peace of mind, that is, "shanthi". In the words of the poet: "Self-reverence, self-knowledge, self-control. These three alone lead life to sovereign power."

After going through this interesting book, one is reminded of some of the precepts in the great epic "Thirukural" by the Tamil sage Thiruvallavar. I wish the author every success in his search for love, truth and justice.

INTRODUCTION

Everybody, wise or wicked, pious or petty-minded, has come to express his concern over the state of affairs in every part of the world where-ever he is born and bred. This concern covers all fields of activity, economic, social and political. No man claims to be happy where-ever his lot engages him to do his part in any of those spheres. From the time he gets up from his bed till he gets back for rest he busies himself with hectic activity if he is industrious or forgets himself in some sort of self-intoxication if he dwells in surfeit. In between these two categories of people there are some other kinds of people of varied mentalities, attitudes and approaches. The bread earner strives to make both ends meet and his sense of accomplishment is limited to the eking out of his livelihood. The middle class man neither tends to be proud of himself by a contrast of his lot with the plight of the poor, nor contented with his fortune congratulating himself on his being above need but his envy of the richer keeps the drive in himself virulently alive to reach or surpass the heights unattained or attained by the persons of higher strata or those whom he envies for ever so many reasons. The affluent person pines all through his life either

for reasons of his ill-health stemming from the richness and undigestible nature of all his daily demands, or of his inadvertent inertia built upon his self-complacence or of insatiable yearning for properties and power of superfluous nature. Of all these three important classes of society the pitiable poor poses as less worried and wearied than the other two classes as the range of his demands and fulfilment giving him the sense of satisfaction and accomplishment is limited lying in a narrow compass. But it is no man's longing to last long in poverty which with the passage of time, has come to be looked down upon as a draw-back in all respects. In the present day though the rich man is proverbially nothing but a poor man with money owing to his abject poverty in spirit and wisdom, he is being credited with undue recognition and reputation in society. The rapid strides of industrialisation and mechanisation keeping pace with technological advancement, have brought in their wake surging tide of materialism with all its allied evils like self-seeking, sensuality, cut-throat competition, hoarding, black-marketing, power-mongering and many-sided depravity. Although the conquest of nature by the modern science and the material prosperity achieved by man, are the matters for pride all this looks like lop-sided development to the wise and virtuous. The off-shoots of all this tremendous progress under the dust and din of competitive

living are the ever increasing discontent, dejection and depravity. Economic progress may ensure a steady flow of physical satisfaction but the mind and heart must also be prepared to receive it for their pleasure and poise. Consequent on the social changes and by the law of habit man has unwarily undergone transformation drifting himself into disintegration, disharmony and dreariness. Despite all prosperity and progress the disharmony in the mental composition of individuals and the unhealthy ethical atmosphere in society have made life unsatisfactory and unpleasant. Man's worship of wealth as be-all and end-all has become the menacing source of infinite mischief and misery.

Society for its well-being evolved religion as long back as the by-gone ages. It was religion and religious philosophy that integrated and harmonised the many sided relations of the people in any society. All social progress in the early ages was linked up with the progress of religious outlook and development, religion constituting the core of all corrective and co-existence. Idols of deities were installed as merely ideals to be imbibed with a sense of devotion. The religious doctrines were looked upon as no less important to the soul as breathing to the life of the body. People of those ages with all their leisure and contentment with nothing like our present

dissipations, were quite upto the task in the attainment of religious fervour, faith and ultimate union with the absolute Reality. Each man judges the possibility or the feasibility of any attainment by his own standard and that test for generalisation would be as fallacious as his judgement itself. People of antiquity by yogas, which may be defined as means of self-integration, such as Gnana-yoga (wisdom), Bhakti-yoga, (devotion), Kharma-yoga (action) and Hatha-yoga (psycho-physical exercise like asanas) could attain such intellectual heights which strike to the modern man either as absurd or as next to impossibility. The man to whom religion was the science of life tuning up his mind to the highest ideals, could so heighten his efficiency by mastering his senses, talents and faculties with his deep sense of devotion and dedication that nothing seemed impossible to him. The turning point in the social order marked itself with the rapid development of science and technology and the impact thereof on the religion and philosophy was colossal in its nature going to the very root. The science and technology having been harnessed by the human intellect to its requirement, have given rise to an incessant increase in the human wants and needs promoting an unhealthy and passionate hunger in man. Such wants and needs which serve to satisfy the senses superficially, do not go deeper than the surface of the skin. Any

fulfilment lasts long and makes its best only when it reaches the core of the heart and rouses therein ripples of rapture and rapport. The influence of the western culture, the modern developments like swift transport facilities, television and cinemas have radically transformed the very outlook and nature of the human beings. Man has given himself up to the preponderance of luxuries, passions and sensuality which in their wake quelled all scruples, virtues and morals. Thus there has come to be now what may be termed as ethics - verses - technics, bringing forth to the forefront rules of expediency and exigencies as the order of the day. Conscience which may be defined as the consciousness of the right or wrong in relation to our actions and activities, is being so much overlooked that it is getting almost defunct. Bad habits and bad tastes like drinking, gambling and debauchery do not look bad to the modern man and instead, they are being looked upon as formalities and forms of modern etiquette in the society. To add gloom to the misery religion has been subjected to all degradation and degeneracy by misconception and misinterpretation of its scope and objectives. Religion which is intended to purify man, has become impure by its association with him. All idolatry is now devoid of any idealism, the idol itself whether of stone or metal, being identified with God Himself by the credulous

and ignorant man. Religion is being mistaken for a paraphernalia of rituals, customs and superstitions divorced from all spiritual efficacy. No man tends to be true to his mental convictions. He in his craze for opulence actuated by avarice and envy embarks upon economic enterprises and speculations going beyond his means and if all goes well with his ventures God can find no place in his mind, even in a nook or corner. It is only in a distressing financial crisis that such man tends to turn to God as the son to his father in the Parable of the Prodigal Son. It is more often towards such plight that the religious-pose-masters, astrologers and palmists look forward with eyes wide open as a rare means of their thrift stretching their dubious hands of help in the obvious helplessness of the victim looking like a drowning man catching at a straw. Thus it has all resulted in an obvious abuse of the process and perversion of the religious propensities. All worship appears to be a bait to capture God and all religion a naughty net in this game.

Politics of the day have turned out to be the poll-tricks as some of the many in one's bag of tricks. Polity has tended to have no relation to the governance or welfare of its subjects or people. Democracy as a way of government by the people, for the people and of the people is only a misnomer. Adult franchise designed to enfran-

chise the people has become adulterous having been sufficiently adulterated with both administrative and election malpractices. The politicians who have developed a philosophy of their own for their private ends stand no comparison with our old rulers. The sense of duty, devotion and dedication for the public welfare, finds no favour with that philosophy. It is a race among opportunists vying with one another to seize opportunities and make the most of the same to their advantage, and to build up their fortunes on the miseries of the people. The lack of education and enlightenment in the ruled and the depravity of all scruples, morals and etiquette in the rulers, have conspired to combine the militant forces and factors at work in bringing about a deplorable state of affairs calling for a corresponding reform from within. Political rights and economic freedom however broadly-based, will not elevate any people morally depraved. The maladies afore mentioned as giving rise to all the present malaise in the society in all spheres of activity, should be tackled in the right perspective and redressed with right thinking and appropriate measures.

In the present complex society with all perplexing problems man is not able to rise above his misery and monstrous monotony. To drown into oblivion such mental tensions and anxieties

arising out of the maladjustment of his body, mind and intellect he runs after the mirage of happiness trying to take refuge in some sort of self-intoxication, self-indulgence or other. Unless and until he becomes aware of the fundamental values of life and develops a correct perspective towards the affairs of the world and inner discipline to face squarely the vicissitudes of his fortune with perfect equanimity life would continue to be fraught with pricking problems of day to day living. Unable to content myself with being a passive spectator at the variegated panorama of the worldly life weighed down with woe I have set myself to this task of suggesting some ways and means of alleviating the malignant influence of the disintegrating forces in the society with the confidence that a correct analysis, searching insight, right thinking and vigorous and stead-fast approach will definitely improve our lot creating an urge for a better life. I will be more than pleased for all this effort of mine if some of the readers at least are awakened to the new vista of possibilities of improving human welfare and exalted happiness.

By
The Author

THE SOVEREIGNTY OF THE DIVINITY

The Creator of the Universe when at the outset set the ball rolling, intended man to occupy a place unique in the order of intellect and fulfil His objectives of the Game as next to Him in rationality. Man in that Game of Divine Dispensation is to uphold the basic laws of Divinity as an umpire but not impair or impede them in defiance or abuse of the trust reposed in him. It ill becomes the custodian to fall foul of his role. If the umpire himself ignores the rules who else can administer justice. If salt loses its savour where from can it be salted. When God taught us language (endowed us with a sense of discretion) it should serve to promote understanding of ourselves and others but not be used to abuse Him (to play Him false). That would be nothing short of sheer ingratitude. A fair sense of gratitude deafeningly demands and eloquently enjoins on us a ready response to the clever calls befitting the position accorded to us in the order of rationality.

Man instead of fulfilling and justifying the trust as the Agent of God, has by virtue of his most unique position come to question the very

authority or supremacy of the Creator. With the rapid advance of science he presumes to have a right to pride himself as being the creator of all matter and power not knowing the limitations thereof and at the same time forgetting that all his creations, if any, would be of immense danger to himself unless they conform to the operation of the God-made-fundamental-universal laws otherwise known as Nature's laws. Matter and science hand in hand may generate power and create wealth but this power and wealth of which man is proud, would consume the creator himself if either of those forces neither knows the purpose nor finds the justification thereof. So man must know his limitations in his endeavour to know the purpose of his life and his life would be treading the right path only when he acknowledges the sovereignty of the Almighty and surrenders and subordinates all his faculties to the dictates and directives of the above.

In the Universe the divine law has unfolded itself in the form of the fundamental-universal-laws uniformly governing all actions and activities therein. These laws are countless in number and there is no action or activity of any body or object escaping the notice and control of these laws. The continuity of the Universe and the uniformity in its functions ever since its inception

abide by the operation of these universal laws or rather owe themselves to those laws. Thus any energy or motion of any object without these laws is inconceivable. Take right from the birth to the demise all functions of all the facets of the infinite Universe follow the inviolable symmetry and system to ensure incessant uniformity and unshakable harmony. The scrutiny of every facet of this infinite variety blending itself with the whole, presents marvels to astonish and astound the human intellect and in a way pointing to the sovereignty of the unseen divine force.

It is not beyond the comprehension of any searching mind to know the infinite variety in all substance and living organism of the Universe and appreciate its mysteries and secrets. The deeper one goes one finds the depths of the divine harmony fathomless. There is the indivisible unity of purpose and perfect harmony in all diversity of the creation governed either by celestial or terrestrial truths. One cannot help being influenced for his good by the understanding of this order of the Divinity and the Divine Providence if he directs his endeavour in that direction with the possible sense of devotion and zeal for wisdom. Right from the motion of any miniature-creature to the intellectual powers of the mankind the blending of the various facets of the biological

system or order is one of the marvels leaving still much more ground for exploration than for any conceited complacence. The Sun rising and setting at particular timings, the manner in which days and nights follow each other, seeds germinate, grow into plants and later into trees under the influence of water, Earth and Sun, the matter and the incessant energy making up the planet of Sun and crores of such mysteries remain mysterious despite the passage of ages. When man's endeavour in all his life is limited to the exploration of such realities, unravelling of the mysteries and the adjustment of himself to his environment but no creation of his own, should it not be a mockery comic contradiction and a travesty of truth to rely on oneself as the end of all while one ought to look to the Almighty and his fundamental universal laws for all inspiration and guidance in his limited span of life looking upon that life as a tangible means of achieving the avowed end.



THE HUMAN SUBSERVIENCE TO WEALTH

Life is intended to be simple but man in his present complex society makes it complicated or seem complicated. Simplicity is a virtue and all complication or complexity is a disturbance therein or a distortion thereof like a hurled stone disturbing the quietness of a still pond or breaking a mirror glass distorting its symmetry. Simplicity is the Nature's first step and of all things it is the hardest thing to be copied. In the by-gone past people led simple lives and enjoyed sense of contentment with no feelings like envy and avarice. They drew their sense of security from Providence in which they had implicit faith and they looked to the hand of Destiny as their guiding force in all matters. But of late wealth is all the security and the self-reliance, right or wrong, is taken for the right and last resort. The man who created all wealth for his convenience, is being created a puppet by the wealth thus reducing his position from that of a master to that of a servant. This love of wealth and the consequent attachment thereto has come to be a dominant force carrying with it all greed and selfishness. The attachment to properties or riches in those days was not so much as it is to-day or in these days. The people till about

a couple of decades back tended to be good and desirous of being thought good and called good. As most of the people strove to be good the proportion or ratio of bad people was quite insignificant or a pretty little. Almost every one set his eyes and mind on good name and fame and directed his endeavour to build it up. It was never the intention; even if it be, it was the least to regard ones own wealth or riches as a cause for all pride and prestige. People used to pride themselves upon being good and kind and they dared not seek any material benefit at the cost of their goodness. Their sense of security lay in an esteemed estimate of themselves and they never hesitated to brave any ordeal in their endeavour to be as good as their words. Mutual confidence and trust thus came to be the order of the times obviously manifesting the bleak necessity of written proofs and evidence in the transaction of their dealings among themselves. People were more afraid of infamy and public opinion than of any legal consequences and consequently the cases that made their way to the courts of law were quite a few in proportion to the then number of oral dealings. Written proof or registered security was usually the last resort or the least in demand in those days. Even in the matter of marriages they looked more to the physical and moral side of the family than to its riches. They seldom envied one another either in the

matter of comparative riches or in the personal talents and accomplishments. They made good and cordial friends and disparities among themselves were more a cementing and unifying force than a dividing, dissipating or disrupting one. Sense of loyalty and reverence to the superiors and elders was a common in-born feature more reverently observed than mechanically maintained. Display of physical valour and sacrifice for common good was a matter of pride and pleasure and all the spirit of competition lay in a good and healthy direction building up good traditions. There was thus a generous outlook and the consequent philanthropic approach in all matters concerning either the self or the society at large. As days and years rolled by witnessing the development of techniques creating more and more needs and desires, improvement of transport facilities enlarging the limits of social contacts and the raging up-surge of self engulfing the good traits of human nature and polluting the social atmosphere man's primary consideration has come to be the self-aggrandisement. To this end all struggle is being directed by man through thick and thin with all the vigour at his command, by all the means within his reach and in all the possible ways open to him.

Man has started amassing wealth primarily not as a security against the wants and needs but

purely for the love of wealth. He who dwells in necessity first amasses riches to meet the demands of his necessity and when once that necessity no longer dwells the feeling of want gets transformed into one of unlimited love or rather craze. He is not able then to set any limits to his craze and struggle in the process because the motivating forces enthusing him to greater and untiring effort, are more imaginary and deluding than real and well founded. The fear and doubt that what he has already earned, however-much it is, may not be sufficient for all foreseeable future to come, for himself, his family and progeny, fills him with restlessness and a feeling of further want. The fear of the possible poverty at some unknown point of future and the possibility of loss of reputation and status associated with his financial position, plague him with a sense of discontent and a frenzy to reach the unattained heights. The man who is powerful and conscious of his potential to make a fortune or money necessary to meet his requirements or to be above need from time to time, fears nothing. Fear is the dungeon of the mind into which it runs and seeks shelter and seclusion. Man has lost sight of all scruples and sense of proportion now-a-days and to-day what is a predominantly motivating factor is greed coupled with enveloping envy. Excess of wealth is the cause of covetousness. When poverty demands

some things as a matter of necessity luxury wants many and avarice all things. Hence frugality came to be based on the principle that all riches had limits. If there is no greed there will be no need. This greed left to itself, would in a good measure bring into play many evil tendencies breeding in its wake selfishness, stinginess, unkindness and the like. Where the weeds of evil forces take roots and grow lustroously the crop of virtues gets stunted in growth and suffers exorbitantly beyond all proportions. The solution thereto, therefore, lies in an effective check on this self-consuming greed.

Health and strength come of no continued rest or rich diet but they are the outcome of a systematic toil and a harmonious exercise of the body and mind. Any overworking or over-indulgence of either of the two besides fatiguing itself, impairs and imperils the development of the other causing imbalance between the two and the consequent ill-health. Unless there is normal health the instincts would be deficient and the emotions imbalanced. Many people go through life or a large part of life only half alive because of their own wrong methods of living and of thinking. Any sickness of body or mind is only a manifestation of chemical imbalance caused by stress and strain more often arising out of tensions and anxieties. Such emotional

difficulties may have their roots in financial problems, trouble with one's own job, children's education, marital trouble etc. More than any of such causes the evil influence of excessive wealth is the distressing emotinal disturbance much in evidence in the present society. Wealth and corruption; luxury and vice have very close affinities to each other. Wealth with all its vicious charms lures man into its arms, embraces him and hugs him so squeezingly that by the time he gets out of the embrace nothing more than a bag of bones will be left in him. Under the influence of such enthralling charms he neglects and enfeebls his body by straining or starving most of the time his faculties at the expense of one another and weakens his mind by too much of sensual indulgence and deleterious distractions. Wealth requires strong and systematic foundation in the initial stage and when once it stabilises itself it can reach any heights. The greater the riches the stronger will be the strings pulling the promoter into mire. All luxury should serve as only a means of relaxation to put tiredness to rest and invigorate the vitality in him but never as the end in itself. Luxury becomes vice when it is an end in itself as it tends to undermine one's position by bringing in many weaknesses in its wake. The sense of luxury as an end in itself, if practised or exercised for long, makes man easy-going,

inactive and dependent. When the going in his own way gets tough for any reasons, he would also stoop to any mean malpractices and trivial tricks. With his sense of ease he would shun all work, much more any hard work thereby giving room for lethargy and laziness. Though the quest for peace of mind otherwise known as good mental health, is universal few or some few are blessed with all the internal qualities and external opportunities that automatically assure it. We have to work to achieve it by striving for a better understanding of ourselves and others, a better insight into the malignant causes of our present malaise and malady, a better appreciation of human and other allied values and a better adaptation of ourselves to the environment and the calls of our duty with a sense of co-operation and in a spirit of co-existence.

Riches by themselves are not harmful but it is the riches in the hands of the unworthy that causes all havoc. A worthy hand holds the riches in trust for himself and others whereas an unworthy holds for himself alone at all costs creating a trust of himself for further promotion of wealth either sacrificing all scruples or developing an indifferent attitude thereto. The religious or moral doctrines dare not go near him, for his wealth is all in all for him. It is his deep rooted conviction that nothing can take the place of

wealth and that nothing can equal it in the matter of satisfying senses with all mundane pleasures. This outlook of man stems from various phenomenal features with the attendant influence on the society. The government policies imposing multiple taxes in a bid to level down the economic disparities in the population, make the rich feel the pinch of parting with his hard-earned or rather hardly-earned money by way of taxes. Relentlessly resenting this onslaught on his revenue he in his turn tries to drain off his hoarded treasure by lavishly and lustroously drowning himself in mirth and misdeeds. Thus the rich have become the redounding repositories of reproachable and reprehensible deeds of renaissance of far reaching repercussions for all reprobation and reproof. Such people account for all night clubs, gambling houses, race courses, nudist parks and scores of such gala parties in society as the sources of disseminating disharmony. Wealth is filth if made by stealth for one's own mirth but for no health. The opulence like fire is a servant when subjugated and a bad master when it goes out of hand. There is no security against the perils of the wealth except becoming rich in spirit.

Envy is the slow and steady poison of the human mind. It consumes man as a moth gnaws garments or as a dryrot decays any wood. It has

no other quality than impeding, impairing and imperilling virtue. Envy is a formidable force in the present society striving to make a bonfire of all public peace and contentment. It has become a common tendency and habit with people to gossip about various people rapidly making fortunes by hook or crook and by leaps and bounds and in so coveting such coveted lot for themselves, curse their inability to vye with others, envy the ability of others in making such easy and ill-gotten wealth, look out for all possible means, fair or foul, at their command and within their reach either to keep pace with them or excel them in that art and to feel elated and elevated when the longing meets with fortune's favour or dejected and depressed when the endeavour ends in vain. What is repeatedly talked of as an expression of a strong desire, channels a groove in the thought pattern and later takes the thought away beyond the pale of any discretion and ultimately leaves it at the fringe of the frenzied flood of fulfilment. Very few people talk now-a-days in praise of the virtuous and the strength of their virtues which are the only means of firing people with motives and incentives capable of sustaining all that is good in the world. Such talk of the good has come to be insipid and inscrutably irresponsible.

The next breeding bed of envy is the one

where all vain-glory, pomp and all patterns of ostentation are magnificently displayed to attract and dazzle the public eyes. Nothing is so credulous as vanity or so ignorant of what becomes itself. Vain-glorious men are the scorn of the wise, the admiration of fools, the idols of parasites and the slaves of their vaunts. The wise only know that the real glory follows virtue like its shadow and the pompous glory leads only to the grave. The obvious intendment of all such magnificent manifestations is to impress upon others one's own greatness, riches, generosity and over-all his superiority. Such things are prone to attract imitation on the part of the other lay men as well as the worldly wise and in due course become conventional. No man ever becomes great by imitation and all imitators are a servile race. Such people rarely improve when they have no better model than themselves to copy after. On such occasions people tend to form comparative estimates of the individuals and their relative superiority and compete with one another with sore feelings of envy in a bid to outwit one another. Thus these festive functions have turned out to be pernicious in their repercussions promoting cut-throat envy, hatred and crazy imitation, where they ought to promote equality, fraternity and fellow-ship. In such gatherings all sorts of upstarts who show themselves to the world as manifestly admired with

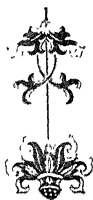
astonished looks, kindle desires in others to reach such heights and overlook others therefrom. All such empty elevations are cold and we become more isolated the higher we rise. Affectation is greater enemy to the face than the small-pox. The poor man does not know that this envy is endless and that he stands to benefit only by deriving a sense of comfort and satisfaction from a wholesome comparison of himself with people of lower strata than of higher strata. Such occasions of pomp and glory being countless covering all sections of people, have been spreading their net of enchantment so wide that very few might be left untouched or unentangled. The only check in this regard is the realisation of the futility of all pomp and splendour and the virtue of simplicity dissociated from all sense of discontent and self-deceit.

God is all compassion and must be remembered more for his mercifulness. The human bondage is sustained by and its survival draws its strength from this compassion. Kindness is the golden chain by which society is bound together. There never was any heart truly great and gracious that was not at the same time tender and compassionate also. This compassion grows or diminishes in inverse ratio with fear of self-preservation. Fear may be the mother of safety but it is the father of disaster

and it has a tender sister by name Suspicion. Compassion and the two others rarely co-exist and seldom co-operate. Compassion leaves by the door through which the two others enter. Never do things which you fear doing, in order that you may never fear anything already done. Fear always springs from ignorance and in time we hate what we often fear. While compassion is a constructive or positive force for the uplift of the society the other is a negative force paving the way for all degradation and degeneracy. Compassion comes of contented life and a contented mind is a hidden treasure beyond the reach of trouble. To be satisfied with one's own lot is the greatest wisdom, for he that increases his riches, increases his cares also in proportion. Every home which should be supposed to be a sanctuary of all soft feelings like compassion, has gradually turned out to be a signal house of all caution and craftiness, the parents holding torches therefor as the guardians of glimmering and gruesome tradition. At these rapid strides of distressing degeneracy every one baffled by the cross-forces and purposes virulently at work, is left in wilderness and prone to despair as to what it is all heading for. Any cry of individuals for the social uplift and reform, if raised in isolation, would prove to be one in wilderness and any attempt should be at the mass level aiming at radical reformation from within. Let us see

what are the possible instructions full of meaning and guidance to every man of the day for that end.

The human mind tends to become what the possessor thinks that he is or will be. Just as the physical body has the adaptability of adjusting itself to the change of circumstances and habits to which we subject it the mind also constantly undergoes a change for the better or worse according as we train it up. Heredity has, no doubt, some place in the constitution of one's mental make-up. But much more depends on the surroundings in which one places himself and the motive forces by which one allows himself to be actuated. Even the highest minded philosopher if placed in the midst of daily discomfort, immorality and vileness, will insensibly gravitate towards brutality. Besides, man's life is made up of a bundle of habits and his career is shaped by the force of these habits. Thus much lies in the choice of the moral surroundings, motive forces and daily habits.



SURROUNDINGS

No man can fail to be powerfully influenced by his moral surroundings in which he is born and brought up in his formative years. Of these surroundings a holy home is the first and foremost in importance, for the early impulses which last the longest and are rooted the deepest, arise from the dominating atmosphere of home. It is here that every human being is taught to be good by the example of the parents, kith and kin or led astray by the influence of bad forces governing the relationship at home. The future destiny of every child is always the work of its mother. Thus home makes the man and law itself is but the reflex of homes. Civilisation is nothing but the reflection of the individual training seen through the medium of communal or social living. In the contribution of this individual training woman plays the pivotal role as she is the pilot to steer clear of all hurdles and hardships thereby making her home either a heaven or hell by the nature of influence she exerts. A sufficient measure of civilisation is the influence of good women and there is a woman at the beginning of all great things. A virtuous woman with wordly wisdom is worth a hundred

school masters in the matter of instruction and more number of preachers in the matter of emulation, for what she imparts is an instruction in action and what she sets herself as is an example radiating illustrious illumination but not a void display of a cluster of rosy precepts. Preaching of sermons with no relation, what-so-ever, to practice does more harm than no preaching at all. Any preacher who does not harmonise his preachings with the transaction of his ordinary affairs of the daily routine, does disservice to society by his hypocrisy and demeaning influence. We can do more good by being good than in any other way. What we need to-day is not much of preachings but instruction in action. We have enough of precepts but we lack in the endeavour of abridging the gulf between the precepts and practice.

Next in importance comes the companionship at school and society. No man can help imitating others with whom he habitually associates himself. In this emulation like begets like and good makes good. Hence it is said that men are known by the company they keep. It is always better to be alone than in bad company. Virtuous people do not associate with or relish the company of the depraved, for their tastes and temperaments do not agree and differ intrinsically. Bad taste is a specie of bad morals and good

taste an off-spring of good sense. By virtuous emulation one's nature and stature get exalted. In the nature of things good does not attract so much as the bad and that is how we see the evil, the vice and the like more in prevalence. Life often pursues us with a choice of the evil rather than good. All the evil and the vice stem from ignorance of the value of virtue and the peace and poise as its natural blessings in the long run. The wicked attracted by the transient and momentary benefits of his actions, indulges in and perpetuates his vicious circle blinding himself to and ignoring the eternal values and the avowed purpose of life. Nothing short of good and no less than virtue alone can bring about right approach, sense of accomplishment, undeviating adherence to truth, abiding sense of duty and poised equanimity. Anything that is born of evil begets evil. A gambler, a drunkard or a debaucher persists in holding on to his habits imagining himself as the one enjoying himself to the utmost but he never realises that his happiness is to be likened to the type of pleasure derived from the scratching sensation of an irritating itch. Such an itch, though a source of pleasant sensation so long as it is in harmony with the scraping fingers, is one of the diseases most despicable. For the self-same reasons every person must exercise his mind but not abuse his talents in the selection of his friends, mates and associates as they are instru-

mental in enriching his understanding, setting him right at times and helping him achieve his objectives. A friend indeed halves our sorrows and doubles our joys. The company of fools may at first make us smile but at last never fails of rendering us melancholy. Many a time great turning points in life owe their origin to a little timely advice of such commendable companions and likewise many a wreck in life has been left in the lurch with poignant memories by the evil influence of the undesirable ones.

Another surrounding is the society and the government that rules. A clear-cut analysis would show that government is no other or no better than the people governed. It is the individual men and their outlook that determine the nature of the government, the moral standing and the stability of the country. A nation's fate in a large measure, depends on the number of its cultivated citizens and men of education, enlightenment and character. If the mass is sound in conscience, morals and habits the nation will have an honest and wholesome rule but if they are dishonest in heart having no respect for law, truth and honesty but on the other hand corrupt and self-seeking the destiny of the nation is to be left to the winds. If one's interests are to be secure the nation shall have a good number of men of exemplifying character in the relation

of its conscience as it were. Thus every individual shall turn to himself as the governing force in the long run in the formation of a wholesome or loathsome government on the principle or maxim that if you take care of paise the rupees will take care of themselves. He that would govern others, first should be master of himself. The best of all governments is that which teaches us to govern ourselves. Political consciousness and civic sense can be awakened by the wariness that the individual welfare is linked up with the common and that no individual can have peace of mind and sense of security in the midst of conflicting and conflagrating common concourse. So everyone by liberally contributing to the social uplift to the best of his might by doing his duty faithfully, would share greater dividends by the operation of the natural Law of Compensation or increasing Returns.



MOTIVE FORCES

What moves or causes; or what impels or induces us to act in a particular way, may be termed the "Motive". This motive may be a feeling or emotion or any other desired end. The motive forces, feelings, instincts and impulses together as one body, may be divided into two categories, positive and negative, the former as constructive and the latter as destructive. Man's career much depends on the influence of these forces and the sum total of all these forces in all the individuals determines the civilisation of a nation. A man is good or bad, exemplifying or demoralising according as he is influenced by the nature of these forces. For such forces the sub-conscious mind is the seat or the store-house the stock taking of which holds a mirror to one's character in any moment. This store house may otherwise be called mental make-up, frame of mind or partially bent of mind.

The mind of man is most often a battle field where the bitterest battles take place between the positive and negative forces. Struggles of the battle field pale into insignificance here when man first contends with inner enemies. In this field if

the array of negative forces is stronger in number and strength negative results follow and vice versa. Such negative forces, to name a few, are anger, fear, suspicion, greed, envy, hatred, egotism, egoism, intolerance, impatience, insincerity, indecision, lust, revenge, slander, vanity and worry. Besides the antonyms of the foregoing, love, compassion, mercy, appreciation of the lofty, delicacy of manner, love of truth, honesty, and amiability and the like are positive forces. One's life is a long drawn war-fare waged by these two army-forces on each and every issue concerning his living or life unless a treaty on any of those issues is already reached by the acknowledgement of the supremacy of one by the other. If the negative forces gain absolute command over the other reducing the latter to virtual impotence there would be rogues and wire-pullers governed neither by law nor by truth. On the other hand where such negative forces have been so tamed and humbled as to give way for the swinging sway of the positive in all matters the embodiment thereof would be incapable of conceiving or perceiving anything bad or evil. Thus greatness or excellance of character results from overcoming all the negative forces and establishing the sovereignty of the positive. So long as the war continues with equal or unequal strength on either side there is bound to be inequilibrium tossing the

mind to and fro and it is only when all the negative forces are driven out of the mind or up-rooted poise and peace prevail and pervade.

It is curious that all procreation and progress in the Universe proceed from pairs of opposites like man and woman, dog and bitch, cock and hen in animate objects and like good and bad, light and darkness, pleasure and pain in other domains. Of such pairs some assume the opposite natures each trying to overshadow or overthrow the other while many pairs supplement each other to constitute an integral whole. In the nature of pairs where the harmony is ingrained as a matter of a natural phenomenon the human effort is not of so much or of such consequence as in the pairs of conflicting natures. It is only in such pairs of conflict reflecting the war between positive and negative thinking the wisdom and discretion assume proportions. The man's choice of the one or the other varies with the depth of his thought, the dimensions of his vision and the shrewdness of his insight. With the guidance of such factors he has to choose only the right relinquishing the wrong. Likewise if the light is developed within the darkness automatically disappears. Wisdom overcomes ignorance, good conduct counteracts and curtails the evil and ultimately the virtue triumphs over and conquers the vile and the wicked. In the matter of choice

we may sometimes mistake the good for the bad and vice versa. We fear pain and spare no effort to condemn it as most despicable and detestable. A little bit of insight would bring to light the hidden truth that all pain is a blessing in disguise if viewed in the proper perspective. It is this pain or ache in the body that manifests some imbalance in the internal system and forewarns us of the impending danger to or inside the body calling for some protective responses for the which the internal human machinery is sufficiently equipped to meet all such contingencies. Sometimes pain reasserts itself if any undue strain is brought to bear upon any fatigued part before the recovery is complete. Pain thus as a signal of danger is as useful as any sense like vision, taste, or smell. Similarly the sensation of pleasure though usually most desirable, may if brought about by some artificial means, undermine the functioning of the internal system leading to total deprivation in the long run. Thus the merit or otherwise of a thing is to be determined by the usefulness and the beneficial nature thereof but not by its appearance or superficial effect. The Universe thus evidences eternal struggle and conflict between the two sets of opposites as the very means of all its survival and they are not to be decried or despised but to be turned to our advantage by making one counterpart grow either with the assistance or at the cost of the other

depending upon its nature. In this process of evolution all the good and the desirable should be churned, chiselled or culled out of this concomitant confluence or combination of the opposites and perpetuated by the subjugation of the virulent and violent for good.

A land uncultivated or sown with no seedlings would bring forth weeds of all sorts. Similarly an idle brain is known as the Devil's work-shop. Idleness is the sanctuary of weak minds and paradise of the fools. Any occupation of the mind with some constructive thoughts as far as possible would prevent the mind from dragging itself into mire. All labour gives health and strength and there is no other royal road to that than through toil. Even leisure is a beautiful garment but it will not suit for constant wear. Gradually from attraction to activity, then activity to industry and lastly industry to worship is the order of natural evolution. One who worships work shuns idleness as the most detestable and likewise an idler seldom relishes any work other than the one promoting his unshakable lethargy. To sow a thought is to reap an action. To sow an action is to reap a habit. To sow a habit is to reap character. To sow character is to reap career.

The best of prayers can be seen not in temples or the Himalayas noted as prayers' resort but in

the hard work carried out with a sense of deep devotion to duty and of dedication for the common good. The doctrines of Bhagavath Gita are of immense relevance and guidance to all mankind in this context. Of late people have fallen into the rut of hankering after quick results and the maximum or undue benefits for a little or no effort at all. Such short-cut methods prove no better than an electrical short-circuit in the frustration of the objectives. The dividing line between the well-gotten and the ill-gotten has been so thinned by the erosion of the modern outlook that it no longer appears to serve its purpose or justify its existence. This approach invariably leads to disappointment and dejection most often as the very pursuit is against the common course of events and the natural attributes of human conduct. That way one cannot develop love of work and the consequent self immersion, the fulfilment or accomplishment of the work itself being the end of all as it were, though in fact it is only a means. By this over-consciousness of the fruits of our labour we have come to fill our minds with delusions and illusions mistaking our haunting misery, deluding restlessness, feverish haste and unlimited love of worldly possessions, for real happiness and cause for all pride. This restless pursuit fills the minds with insatiable desires, flaming passions and ultimately wretched recklessness. All must

realise that no real pleasure or peace of mind can arise from any means which any one governed either by law of the land or universal truth, cannot approach without a reproach of his conservative conscience.

No man's life is purposeful unless he renders it serviceable. Benevolent feeling ennoble the most trifling actions. Even in the matter of government it is the spirit of service that determines the fitness of a ruler, the ablest to serve being the fittest to rule. He profits most who serves best. Whoever is far from the thought of service, is no other than a self-seeker. It is the will and not the gift that makes the giver. If we sow good services sweet remembrances will grow from them. The greatest pleasure one can find, is to do a good deed by stealth and have it found out by accident. An abiding sense of service coupled with a sense of duty upholds man in his highest attitudes and also sustains him equally in the transaction of his ordinary affairs of every day existence. A rational nature admits of nothing which is not serviceable to the rest of mankind. Such attitude counteracts selfish motives and greed and fills in its place feelings of oneness developing the blessed art of sharing the pleasure and possessions with others. The truest guide to the greatest art of finding peace of mind is that which helps the greatest number

of others to find it. Man makes a living by what he gets but he makes a life by what he gives. Giving does not impoverish us in the service of our Maker; nor does with-holding enrich us. Real happiness depends on what you can give, not on what you can get. Any sacrifice by a prudent man is more often rewarded with returns many-fold and he grows richer by more giving than with - holding. This is practical wisdom based on courage and far-sightedness. The fear that he becomes poorer to the extent to which he parts with, is the cause for all greed. There is nothing more fearsome than the fear itself and this fear results from ignorance, an underestimate of one's own faculties and potentialities, and an ill-founded imagination. A man endowed with courage and right thinking develops a potential for success by turning all adversities even to his advantage, for success or defeat comes not from circumstances but from the built-in-attitude of success or defeat respectively. The keenest blade owes thanks to the blunt stone which sharpens it by its roughness, and thus every adversity is a blessing in disguise carrying with it a seed of an equivalent or greater benefit. Such adversities serve as touch-stones to prove one's mettle and mental strength. A man is what the winds and tides have made him. It is only after crosses and losses men grow humbler and wiser. Fear of failure attracts failure. By training of oneself one attracts

failure by always thinking and talking in terms of failure and a successful mind tunes in on other minds to the prospects of success. Out of the worst the wise will find the means of good. To think a thing impossible is the way to make it so. One's contribution to society one way or the other lies in the manner in which he develops his faculties and talents. The fear of poverty and the fear of loss of reputation, status etc. of oneself and his progeny brings the self to the surface drowning all other considerations to the lowest depths. This up-surge of self was sought to be kept under an effective check by most of the religions. For example Christianity dissuades the votary from having any thought about the morrow on the plea that the morrow shall take thought for the thing of itself and Hinduism through its Bhagavath Gita advocates the renunciation of all the fruits of labour, in other words "Nishkama Karma."

That society is the best where the discipline is the most and yet the least felt and where science and knowledge; material prosperity and spiritual progress; intellectual development and character building make pace side by side and hand in hand. These two sets of forces which were once integral, have become more and more isolated and concentrated in their respective domains with the result that there has come to be such a conflict as faith verses reason and ethics verses technics.

Intellectual powers have gained more and more control over those of the heart which with its governing conscience has almost been reduced to a rarity or a state of defunction. Although genius which is a product of the brain power, can always command admiration it is the character, a product of the heart power, that rules and rules supreme securing the utmost respect in the long run. Men of genius are more of perspiration than of inspiration and they stand to any society in the relation of its intellect while men of character of its conscience reflecting the degree of discipline of the society to which they belong. Just as any man of deficient self control, weak-purpose and ill-regulated passions makes a mess of his life with all his riches and other possessions as pin-pricks in his bed of life, a conscientious man with definiteness of purpose, regulated habits and high principles can make his life a bed of roses unmindful of his life either being blessed with a fortune or cursed with abject poverty. Whoever cuts many corners of his conscience and usually compromises with it by the force of habit, would be driving a sharp bargain with life, his riches and other worldly possessions serving no more than being a source of temptations and snares, and of infinite mischief to himself and others.

To begin with for a good career good sense

is the basic requirement for one and all and that goodness stands to one's life in the relation of its life-giving blood. Just as disintegration sets in with the deterioration either in the quality or circulation of such blood so also in one's career with the all-pervading goodness for the steadiness and soundness of one's life. Good sense issues in practical wisdom if disciplined by experience and inspired by love of goodness. All that is good in the world is upheld only by the virtuous and without such people the world would not be worth living in. Every thing great is not always good but all good things are great. Goodness and wisdom are inter-related in-as-much-as the pursuit of one leads to the attainment of the other. They are co-existent and co-extensive in their influence. The love of goodness and all virtue when rendered into a habit, brings in good cheer in all circumstances reducing the vicissitudes of life to a state of servility or subservience and at the same time promoting dispassionate outlook and mental equilibrium. Likewise the influence of evil dissipates the energies, distracts the attentions, drives disharmonies into all facets of all the phases of life and leaves a long trail of its track of dreariness. He that commits no evil has nothing to fear. Eschewing of all evil is essential as every evil seed is bound to bear an evil fruit. Thus our deeds determine us as much as we determine our deeds. Either way life reflects back

the image one shows to life and we cannot hold the mirror responsible for the image it reflects.

Lastly the love of rectitude in all its aspects and respects falls to consideration. The attainment of virtue is the highest learning and the study of life is the science of happiness. Nothing can be truly great which is not right. Joy of the right conduct is inherent in the human conduct. Any course of conduct if rendered into a habit, would not depart from its habitual course for good or bad. Take for instance that any man however bad he is in his conduct and character, cannot look at his sister with any sexual desire however beautiful she may be and whatever may be his sexual appetite. Similarly any conscientious man whatever may be his necessity, cannot steal any other's property though that can be done without anybody's knowledge because the very thought in both the cases is repulsive for the reason that the thought pattern has been trained since a long time in a way consistent with a definite purpose intrinsically opposed to those misdeeds. If we question ourselves as to why one should behave singularly in such cases and not adopt similar attitude in the case of some other woman or some other heinous crime like black-marketting worse than theft the reasons become obvious. When we look down upon certain acts with definite purpose for a long

while the mental attitude correspondingly adapts itself to that purpose and in course of time becomes part of our nature. Thus good or bad conduct or character builds itself into our nature according as we formulate our purpose and maintain the same perseverantly. The steadfastness and undeviating adherence to any objective varies with the intensity of the purpose with which we pursue our ideals. Thus by our long attachment to a particular course of conduct we develop built-in attitude compatible with our aims and objectives and there-by render ourselves incapable of doing either good or bad opposed to our nature.

A good deal of understanding of the values of life, sound principles, lofty ideals and spiritual truths paves the way for right perspective, broad-mindedness and tender feelings. Efforts in the direction of self-control and self-denial are instrumental in bringing the mind and senses under control. The senses which act as the steeds of the chariot of life, turn turtle the chariot when subjected to no rigours of the reins. Life can make great strides if the senses are sensitive to the spurs of fruition and on the other hand their frailty blinds the vision to the distant horizons of bright future and promising career and enfeebles the mind so much as to be unable to do any more than planning to meet the demands of the flesh.

Mere indulgence in the sensual pleasures is beastly. He that lives in the kingdom of sense will die in the kingdom of sorrow. How poor a thing is man unless he erects himself above himself! The domination of the senses or sensuality doggedly develops despondent dependence. While man is justified in satisfying his desires, which is essential for the expression of life, to conform to the dictates of his desires is not the law of his being. Excessive self-indulgence or self-denial is hardly warranted by the present set-up of society but a moderate measure thereof transgressing no limits of propriety, may not be inappropriate. Pleasure and pain are relative terms relative to the states of mind and body having no well defined limits of demarcations. They are also interdependent in as much as one cannot exist without the other like day and night. Neither of them is permanent and they are ever changing. Let a tired man lie on a most comfortable mattress and he would find immense satisfaction and pleasure to his heart's content. When the relaxation is prolonged the body starts aching and finds the previous comfort uneasy and sickening. Too much rest itself becomes a pain. Similarly work may be tedious and tiresome in the beginning but in due course of time the same work attracts worship and fills the mind with a sense of satisfaction. Most often a hard worker finds his hard work more pleasing and satiating

his tastes than even rest. Thus it is the attitude that counts more than the means. No man is happy who does not think himself so. The foolish man seeks happiness in the distance, the wise grows it under his feet. Happiness or misery generally goes to those who have most of the one or the other but not by virtue of one's own lot. Heaven must be in us before we can be in heaven.

Righteous conduct governed by love of virtue when pursued with undeviating adherence to truth, honesty and amiability, enables one and all to live and act blissfully in all circumstances undisturbed and undejected by the vagaries of life. Good things cease to be good by our wrong enjoyment thereof. Good order is the foundation of all good things. No body is certain of the existence of hell or heaven to invite him after death but it is certainly in one's own hands to make a hell or heaven of life by the nature of his conduct and character. The existence of God and his part in the governance of the universe packed with lives beyond all number, are not matters to admit of no doubt. That is a matter to which debate is possible. The relevancy and relativity thereof will be discussed at length at another stage. Suffice it to say in this context that our deeds receive their rewards or rebuffs within a reasonable time, not as decreed by any destiny nor as ordained by the judgment of the

Deliveror but by the operation of the Fundamental Universal Laws testifying that every one must reap what he sows. Our senses are our governors functioning under the sovereignty of the mind. Train your senses the way they should go and they will never depart from the trained course in due course of time. This discipline of the senses helps in the attainment of the mastery of one-self which is quite essential to overcome flaming passions which if under no effective check, are always prone to drive imbalance into the mind, and corrupt your conscience. A guilty conscience is hell on earth and points to one beyond. A man of integrity will never listen to any plea against conscience. If you compromise with your conscience as a matter of course it will not be long before you will have no conscience at all, for your conscience will fail to guide you. The crop of virtues yields bumper harvest of mental bliss and perpetual poise when it draws its life-giving water of goodness through the channels of duty and is fertilised by love of truth.



THE LAW OF HABIT

Repeated action indulged in, consolidates itself into a habit. Our body and mind have an adaptability of adjusting themselves to the repetition in any sphere of activity pertaining to human life. Habit becomes second nature and so actions that have become habitual, are done almost instinctively; at least without the necessity for definite reflection. Any action which has become habitual, tends to be pleasant. A man is not good at all unless he takes pleasure in noble deeds. Habit is the deepest law of human nature and it is either the best of servants or the worst of masters. We first make our habits and then our habits make us. Even character is simply a habit long continued. Good habits cultivated from an early age enable a man to make the best of life. Let a student get into the habit of regularly prosecuting his studies with no pernicious practice of procrastination, let any young man make it habitual to complete his day's work before he leaves his work spot and let any man develop the habit of diligently discharging his duties in any walk of life, such persons are bound to attain genuine excellence, indefatigable industry, tact and energy in action and sterling

integrity commanding the spontaneous homage of mankind. Right type of habits co-ordinate the functions of the faculties and talents and aggrandise their aggregate harmony. The benefits of good habits may not be so much as the damage to result from bad habits. The growth of the former would not be so fast as the latter. Thus much vigilance is necessary to guard against the temptations from bad habits. The influence of a bad habit is such that men more often cling to vices even while they curse them. The chief ends of moral discipline are to combat the evil influence of bad habits spreading like a wildfire. Habit, if not resisted or nipped in the bud, soon becomes a necessity and later ten times nature. The bad habits owe their origin and strength to deficient self-control, weak purpose and ill-regulated passions and they enslave the mind to such an extent as to reduce the individuality to a state of servile sub-ordination to the dictates of the senses. Thus all liberties of the mind and body start fretting under the fetters of bad habits and fritter into flitters. It is not far from truth nor is it an exaggeration to state that the heaviest load one can carry is a bundle of bad habits.



DUTY

*"Asleep I dreamt that life was a Bay of Beauty;
Awake I discovered that life was a Deluge of Duty."*

—AUTHOR

Duty may be defined as an obligation of the doer to satisfy a claim made upon him by his community, some other individual member or members of his society in the name of the common good. Duties are right actions which many people are tempted to avoid doing for the simple reason that the good effects of those duties are on people other than doer of the action. If the duty is an obligation a right is a justifiable claim in a community and they are correlated to each other as one presupposes the existence of the other. If an individual has a right it is his duty to use that right for the common good. The doing of one's duty embodies the highest ideal of life and character. Duty is the sublimest word in the language; you can never do more than your duty; you should never wish to do less. There is not a moment without some duty and duty is divine law. This duty consciousness promotes up-rightness, faithfulness and fortitude. Habitual dereliction of duty depraves the doer and makes him despondent. A duty dodged is

like a debt unpaid; it is deferred and we must come back and settle the account at last. It is but natural for all aspirants to aim high and plan the achievement thereof. Great dreams make great men. For such accomplishment an abiding sense of duty avoids dissipating distractions, sustains the individuality and asserts its projecting influence. Do your duty leaving the rest to its destiny and the rest follows quite fittingly. Every duty which we omit obscures some truth which we should have known. It is an irony of fate that people have come to be more and more power conscious, power mongering and power crazy at the cost of duty and character. This power tends to corrupt people and absolute power corrupts absolutely unless the love of virtue and devotion to duty ardently guard against such pitfalls of temptation. All social life, stability, progress and virtue depend upon each man's confidence in his neighbour; a reliance upon him to do his duty.

“Honour and shame from no condition rise;
Act well your part, there all honour lies.”

—Pope



THE SENSES AND THEIR ROLE

Nothing is always good or bad by itself. Even poison which every one should be afraid of, is sometimes essential to heal some incurable diseases. The most delicious dish starts sickening when the usual dosage is exceeded. Thus the nature or character of a thing is determined by the type of reaction it causes on the whole. The sense organs and the physical body with all its component limbs are the key instruments of perception and the medium of instructions to the mind giving it the sense of pain and pleasure. Each sense or sense-organ is a tributary of a particular region acting co-ordinatedly under the supremacy of the mind. When all of such senses co-ordinate their functions coherently to the dictates of their ruler, the mind endowed with all wisdom and inspired by goodness, the outcome will be an integrated well-being. By uniting and unifying we stand and by dividing and disintegrating we fall. This process prescribes certain principles for guidance and guardianship.

In the nature of things every object or living organ must observe its limitations as enjoined by the Nature to maximise its utility and satisfaction as otherwise clash and collapse will be the conco-

mitant of the conflicting concourse. As We all draw our nourishment from the only source i. e., Nature we must look upon her as our divine mother and obey her orders obediently and follow her instructions reverently like innocent children to receive her bountiful blessings, to experience the thrills of her love and to reap the benefits of her affectionate association. Nature cleverly satisfies all our instinctive and impulsive demands if we patiently listen to her. Disobedience to or defiance of the motherly ministrations draws disharmony, discontent, distaste, disgust, debilitation, debasement, degeneracy, self-deceit, despondence, defeasance, defection, disparity, defilement, deformation, depravity, delinquency, damnation, depressing defunction, dipsomania, despairing desolation, disappointing disability, disastrous - distraction, disaffection, decrying discomfort, discordant digression, disrespect, disgraceful disfellowship, disservice, disinclination, disorder, disruption, disproportion, despicable disposition, dissimulation, distressing dissipation, disturbing disunity, divine divesment and devastating dwindlement. On the other hand reverential loyalty to Nature and its norms ensures health and strength, progress and prosperity, poise and peace. It is, therefore, necessary to analyse the Nature and its norms so as to know how best we should harmonise our senses with the motherly Nature.

In the creation itself it was made part of the universal laws that all creatures should consistently conform to and obediently observe the directives and the dictates of Nature in sustaining themselves normally and in preserving and preventing their energies from decay and disintegration. For this end every creature was endowed with the power of resistance as a means of self-preservation to dispel any alien-element, to fight to the last any enemy force and to restore normalcy as a matter of course in all respects. Any force disturbing, distorting or decaying the functions which are ordained by Nature, would be resisted and repelled by the dint of the inherent resistance power to the best of its ability. In this process it is part of that resistance power to adjust itself to the change to which it is habitually subjected. During such struggle for repulsion or adjustment if the resistance power is overcome by the invading forces the result will be the total extinction of the indigenous forces. To illustrate this we may take up the habit of drinking alcohols as intoxicants. The first and initial doses of any strong drink would be repulsive and unpalatable. Reeling sensation, giddiness, vomittings etc. follow as the natural reaction of the biological forces fighting the invasion. Both the external and internal manifestations resulting from such drink, are indications of the disturbance and distortion of the normal functions in the body,

How much such drinks affect the body depends on the number of intakes and the damage varies in ratio with such number. The senses and the sensory-organs which with the bodily resistance power try to repel the enemy forces in the initial stages, get adjusted and used to the repeated invasions and give rise to a mixed or cross breed of forces as it were. When the homogenous forces in the body yield to the alien forces and get replaced partly by the foreign forces the normal functioning would appear to be restored when the two forces are suitably balanced against each other by the admixture of forces. Thus in due course of time drinks become indispensable to normalise the functions though the original normalcy is a rarity or the remotest possibility. Thus weaknesses set in and perseverantly persist till the doomsday and the remedies found therefor by habituation and further indulgence, meet with further aggravation and deterioration instead of any mitigation or amelioration. All recourse to extraneous and incompatible forces and elements invariably bring in disharmony and disintegration and hence the right course would be to respect Nature in its natural form. Any deviation leads to artificiality which in its turn results in duplicity running counter to simplicity. Thus when people once begin to deviate they do not know where to stop and all such deviation impairs the faculties to some extent or other consciously or un-

noticeably. At the first cup man drinks wine, at the second cup wine drinks wine and at the third cup wine drinks man leading to habitual intoxication which is the epitome of all crimes. Ultimately oriented conservatism with no prejudice to dynamic approach is the only recourse to avert the avalanche of malignant maladjustment resulting from recalcitrant artificiality and duplicity. Such gradual invasion over the natural phenomena in any form is bound to bring about inequilibrium and maladjustment and should be repelled at any rate in the initial stages. All bad habits are the manifestations of such inequilibrium and maladjustment in the senses. The salvation lies in keeping close to the Nature conforming all human actions and activities to the Nature's order or system and controlling continually the Will to guard against transgression of the self-imposed wholesome limits.

Excesses in any matter are as bad as the evils themselves. The animals and birds have no more desires and passions than the demands of the day but unlike those, man tends to become sensuous, passionate and lusty by more and more indulgence until he becomes a slave of his senses. The madness of desire will defeat its own pursuits. The senses are thus prone to exercise greater spell over the mind and become insatiable if they are more and more satisfied or indulged in.

Sensuality attracts variety as the spice of life and this variety leads to unnatural and illicit outbursts. Similarly the demands of the stomach also grow in proportion by more and more feeding until one becomes a glutton for whom kitchen is his shrine, cook his priest, the table his altar and belly his God. Food and sex which were being looked upon as biological necessities and as means of survival and procreation respectively, are being now considered as sources of inspiration and recreation besides being luxuries. This food-hunger and sex-desire are assuming dangerous proportions in such manner and at such rate that they are to be decried and deprecated forthwith. They have become the world-wide problems manifesting themselves in all ugly and unnatural forms. The food we are taking in, has undergone a tremendous transformation both in the content and method of preparation more to the taste of the palate than to add to the health. Though the raw fruit or leaf is the best for health it finds no traces of its original form or taste by the time it reaches the mouth on account of the variety and complexity of cooking. Similarly the very outlook of every individual in regard to sex has so undergone a change that it has assumed the most prominent place in the order of human needs. Modern and ultra modern modes of dress in stark naked and half nude poses of varied fashions dazzle the public eyes, kindle envious and lusty

looks, drive discontent and dejection and drown the victims in craze and frenzy. In this context it is appropriate to reflect on the present influence of cinemas. Now-a-days cinema is almost an enemy or an enema of ethics to all intents and purposes. People who are weighed down with an over-load of worries and anxieties resulting from the complexity of life, seek some sort of mental relief through the recreation found from the screen. The producers who hide themselves behind those screens stealthily staring at the purses of the audience, are more self-seeking by dazzling the eyes and unhinging the undisciplined minds with the exhibition of indecent and indecorous gestures and obscene and obnoxious postures, than either sensible or sensitive to any calls of duty, decency or decorum. Such motion pictures of sedulously seductive nature have turned out to be a most malignant medium of instruction having successfully made inroads into all the provinces of senses, sentiments and scruples debasing the human values, lowering the tastes and developing unwholesome attitudes of sex-mania. Despite the awareness that a man eating much reaps indigestion soon and indulging much in sex loses a good deal of health, wealth and energy he finds himself swept away in the current of common tastes and public attractions. Let not your mirth be so extravagant as to intoxicate your mind and drown it into the sea of sorrow

so heavy as to depress your heart, for the pursuits in that regard are linked up with mischief and evil. Thus such sensual excesses spell disaster on all the human race. He that dwells and revels in the domain of sense finds refuge in the grave-yard of sorrow and dreariness. He who is ruled by passions is the worst of slaves. When passion is on the throne reason is out of doors. It is easier to suppress the first desire than to satisfy all the like following in succession. The hunger of desires is never filled nor fully gratified. Renunciation of objects however hard one may try, is short without renunciation of desires. To strive for happiness through senses is like seeking wool from an ass. That which is sweet will no longer be sweet if it is repeatedly sought and secured.

The sensual indulgence deprives man of his sense of time and values of life, the indulgence itself being prodigal. He little realises that economy in itself is a source of great revenue and rest, and that wastage of time is the most extravagant and costly of all expenses. Lost time will never be found again while procrastination is the thief of time. Well arranged time is the right index of a well balanced mind and any expert is one who knows more and more about less and less. Similarly sexual excess or any other excess of any physical activity

for that matter blinds the victim to the other values in life. This extravagance renders it difficult to live within one's own means though his income is sufficient to keep him above need in the normal circumstances. Whoever does not conform to the rules of wisdom despite his learning, is like a man who ploughs in his field but does not sow.

Temperance or moderation is the best means of gratifying natural and healthy appetite. He who feasts every day, feasts no day. Moderation is the parent of all virtues, nay, the root of all morality. Every one who strives for mastery is temperate in all things. We have to avoid extremes by adopting moderation in all like self-control in senses, temperance in food, soberness in drink, continence in body, forbearance in anger, self-command in temper, modesty in action, humility in success, hopefulness in defeat, self conquest in desire and self-denial in pleasure. We have to avoid allurements of voluptuousness, for enjoyment of that sort leads us on to disease and death. We get enfeebled by dalliance, pampered by luxury and solttened by sloth. What holds a golden key to enjoyment, is restraint and no one can be deemed to be free who is not a master of himself. A life of harmony is impossible without some sort of self restraint. Who will adhere to him that abandons himself? We must stand

erect but not be kept erect by others. Nothing is impossible to diligence and skill and the association of the will therewith makes the achievement much easier. Whoever is firm and resolute in will, can mould the world to himself with his constancy to purpose as the secret of all success. We can soon achieve this temperance if we ardently long for it. After all real peace lies not in satisfying desires but in moderating and sublimating them. Thus every man is an artificer or architect of his own happiness or misery. All virtue lies in the struggle but not in the prize, and victory favours only those persistently persevering but not perilously panting. The secret of happiness consists in taking the life as it is and reflecting on our present blessings of which every one has many as a source of our satisfaction but not on the future fortunes and possessions of which we have only a prospect or those of others as the cause of our envy and avarice.



SEL-FCONCEIT LEADING TO SELF DECEIT

Egotism, the practice of speaking much of oneself and egoism, the theory of self interest as the principle of morality are the manifestations of ignorance and short-sightedness. To think one-self cleverer than other people is the surest way of cheating oneself. No man was ever so much deceived or hurt but by himself. The first step to overcome ignorance and pave the way for knowledge is to know his own ignorance. To be ignorant of one's ignorance is the malady of one's ignorance. There is none so blind as those that won't see. Mistaking this ignorance of one's own good, for his worldly wisdom or wise-living man has come to be a most injudicious judge of himself. Either by the force of habits or by the weakness of purpose in life he has tended to be conceitedly complacent over the shadows of pleasures but rarely experiencing the real or genuine pleasures. He has not equipped himself with discreet discretion to evaluate human values and those ancillary thereto in the right perspective. Environment exercising and exerting its utmost influence on the outlook and the behaviour of the people, has come to occupy the most pre-

dominant place in the society. Similarly every individual in that society by his conduct and character influences the environment to the extent to which his power and position extend for the worse or better according to his nature. So man and environment reflect back the image each presents to the other as if each were a mirror to the other. In this process life has come to be, or rather been made to be what it is and it is an apt appreciation and appropriate application of the forces governing the conduct and character of the persons that can set at rest the malaise and malady constantly confronting us. To this end a correct appraisal of our weaknesses and virtues ; distractions and attractions is the right step towards the desired goal. With the advent of the technological advances and the surging tide of materialism man has become more and more easy-going, comfort-minded and sensually-indulgent and at the same time less and less duty-conscious, morally-scrupulous and regulated in habits, passions etc. The sense of ease and comfort tends to grow in its magnitude by more and more indulgence therein. Any recreation preceded by no effort or labour, conditioned by no restraint or regulation ; any fortune either ill-gotten or made by fluke and any life that knows no scruples, follows no principles, observes no norms and sets before itself no limits are only delusions far from realities. The happiness derived from such dubious and deleterious

means is the most short-lived and more imaginary than real. Anything that is not normal, natural and native either in its relation to the senses or to the structural science, strays into artificiality and shall by the operation of the Nature's laws, throw itself out one way or another. Thus our social life replete with artificiality, finds its refuge in refractory duplicity dealing a death blow to simplicity and lands itself in perplexity associated with complexity. It is a pity that the man knowing the above weakness in himself does not make amends therefor by a righteous recourse to a right conduct nor does he attempt to ameliorate his plight by making good his escape from the clutches of the sophisticated social sophistry. Nothing is more pitiable than this self-imposed slavery in clinging on to the vicious life in utter self-conceitedness.

True beauty, after all, consists in purity of heart. It is the inward beauty like thick clouds that ensure a continuous down-pour of rain of sublime love but not the external beauty like a passing-cloud showering dristles and scattered rains now and then, and here and there. Beauty of the exterior is only a passing phase while that of the interior is co-extensive with the span of life growing in intensity with the advancement of the age unlike the other. The former is the intoxication of the senses which element gets

maintained by reinforcements from time to time while the latter is the bracing breeze perennially flowing from the sea of heart. The beauty of the heart is the glitter of pure gold and the other is that of spurious gold. The former is more the product of culture and refinement while the latter is the dazzle of the danglers. To love the inner the feelings come from the core and to love the outer is superficial. The beauty of all beauties is the one that gaily gushes out all grace, elegantly endows all equanimity, majestically maintains all magnanimity and keenly kindles all kindliness. I am afraid that man given all the sensual pleasures in this world, may not aspire for anything more or beyond or ever bother about any scruples or fear about offending the feelings, sentiments etc. of others. To cultivate such culture as is necessary to reform oneself from within self-integration, self discipline and self-watchfulness are very essential. In the modern times every man tends to be pleased more by the beauty catching the eye than by the one kindling the heart. The cinema-house and its allied institutions of the cine-field have ironically turned out to be the nurseries, schools and colleges to promote this art and artifice of all such devilishly dexterous danglers' dazzle playing upon the weak and wearied senses. This is all due to the the imbalance and disharmony between the senses and the heart, the seat of conscience, the former overwhelmingly

exercising their sway over the latter. Right thinking well guarded by wisdom and right conduct well-regulated by self-discipline and self-watchfulness, must help us in achieving the love of the real beauty.

In the present world be it the vain vanity of one's vantage, the ignorance of the value of virtue, the outcome of sensuality or sensual indulgence, the insincerity of purpose or the up-surge of passions leading to virulent and wild tastes as the cause of all the malady, maladjustment and malevolence there is neither the search for truth nor an endeavour to ameliorate one's own plight. Owing to the over-all degeneracy and degradation every individual tries to derive a sense of comfort and covetousness from the public opinion, estimates and esteem not knowing or consciously ignoring the fact that the majority of the people are ill-informed and ill-advised. In such pursuit every individual is prone to imbibe and be influenced for no good of his and he has to guard against the evil tendencies of the public. To follow the public is to blind oneself and if the blind leads the blind both shall fall into the ditch. It has become a deluding fashion to find fault with the government characterizing it as demoralising and demeaning. It is no difficulty to understand that the majority vote is the determining factor and that each one with some

exceptions, is one in that majority. When we go by the majority and if that majority are insane the sane shall find their refuge not in the society but in hospitals. If votes are to be weighed and not counted the majority should be brushed aside. The masses with the mass-mentality procure their opinions ready made in the open market but do not attempt to ventilate their dungeon-like brains with any education and enlightenment. Thus we build statues of snow and weep to see them melt. The need of the day, therefore, is for each to train up himself in such a way as to be independent in thinking, to be a judicious judge of himself in the light of his own experiences and to be a practical philosopher setting before him for observance equitable ideals, prudent principles and temperate temperance.



THE PURPOSE OF LIFE

There is no human action or activity without a motive or desire behind it. Selfless love and service are the off-shoots of a religious and philanthropic bent of mind found more often in the past and more so in the distant past. The current will be pure if and when the service is pure resulting from purity of mind and heart. The love of fruits and the desires and passions prompting all perilous pursuits are the motive forces for all actions and activities in the present day. No man sets himself to any task nor sets his mind or eyes on any accomplishment unless actuated by some form of attraction or tempted by some allurement or other. When such is the attitude and attachment towards fruitfulness or productivity of human endeavour it is strange as to how few or very few people alone evince interest in the quest of the understanding, appreciation, and attainment of the very purpose of life itself. This likens itself to a penny-wise and pound foolish outlook resulting from a malady of one's own ignorance of one's own self.

What is the purpose of life is a question perpetually presenting itself to mankind from generation to generation ever since the philosophy origi-

nated from human conception. Yet no hard and fast rules could be laid down in this regard as this was a dynamic issue of varying significance from age to age. In the beginning the purpose of life was extended to the sacrifice of oneself with total renunciation associated with utter self-denial in the process of attaining union with God. Later renunciation was restricted to the fruits of one's actions while performance of one's role in life "Swadharma-Nirvahana" was recommended as a means of attaining the end. Still later this doctrine was further modified into one of sacrificing oneself for the good of his fellow-men and mother-land. Later approach came to define this as discharging one's duties for the good of himself and that of others too but chiefly subordinating the interests of oneself to those of others. All these definitions were designed to maximise the individual as well as common benefits or welfare with a minimum or no sacrifice or contribution at all by each ultimately. If every one strives for the good of all others he in the final analysis gains far more than he loses. This approach helped in creating a sense of service and sacrifice by promoting universal love and feeling of oneness.

The world is a stage of the infinite drama where we are all enacting our respective roles to make up the whole. The merit of the drama makes its mark if every one of the actors does

justice to his role by acquitting himself well in his duty. As the range of this drama is extensive, wide and vast the role of each individual gets reduced in significance and its influence on the over-all effect. But that is no reason to under-rate the individual role as no one can fail to influence his surroundings and a section of his people, at least, for good or bad subject to his position and status. Thus if every one acts up to the best of his part and his ability the whole will be whole-heartedly wholesome. But now with the predominance of the self more often making inroads into the domains of others and invading their rights and liberties for one's own self aggrandisement the old doctrines propagating broad-mindedness and philanthropic outlook sound fantastic and impracticable besides being irreconcilable with one's petti-mindedness and parochialism. In this background the primary purpose of life in the present generation may aptly be defined as no more than faithful devotion to duty followed by practical wisdom based on love of virtue and service of humanity as equal to worship of God. That alone would serve to calm the stormy billows and set the sails for a smooth voyage of life. If we stretch the string too far it is more often likely to snap very soon. Reason lays thread bare the range of rigidity of any rule in respect of any region of human activity. When reason is ardently against a man

the man will soon tend to be against reason by dint of his nature. Where the attitude is defiant the law either of body or of spirit should be the least because the greater the stress of the law the more will be the defiance and disrespect. Before such law is made more stringent endeavour should be to promote respect for the law already in vogue. In order that the maximum benefits may be reaped for common good any thing advocated or propagated should be within the reach and practice of the majority as otherwise it merely serves to be an empty sermon. It is a pity that religious doctrines, spiritual discourses and philanthropic policies have come to serve no more than academic interests and that they fall short of the finer sentiments of the common folks in their appeal. When the law of persons holding out all threats of punishment for any violation thereof, is being honoured more in circumvention what is the plight of the law of spirit the violation of which is attended with no fear of punishment during this tenure of life? Philosophy first should aim at moulding character and conduct free from all flaw, the law of either the body or the spirit having nothing more to correct in them. Who to himself is law, needs no law. One's only limitation is the one which one sets up in his own mind. Justice is to give every one in his own on the ciple "live and let live."

THE RELATIVE INFLUENCE OF THE PAST, PRESENT AND FUTURE

All past is to be construed as the foundation, present as a phase of positive action and future as the prospective fruits of the present. As any structure or super-structure without suitable and stable foundation, cannot sustain itself so also our present positive action to be most beneficial, must be founded or rested on the experiences and warnings gained from the past and made so providentially and propitiously productive as to hold out blooming prospects of a bright future. Whoever ignores the rose of warning must learn, instead, from the thorn of experience. To be forewarned is to be forearmed. All the matter of the present owes its existence to the past and the present merely maintains only the link as a transitional stage between the past and future. It is the harmonious blending of the influences of the three that can evolve an integral whole in any sphere of activity. Everything can be viewed from two angles, one discovering the bright side and the other betraying the dark side of each material object and objective. Whether one lived a pious or poignant life in the past the bright side of his view-point would reveal the past experi-

ences carrying bountiful instructions and suggesting at the same time remedial measures. Of course this requires sense of optimism coupled with wisdom. In such case every experience would add to his wisdom and enable him to better himself by the guidance of his past experience. On the other hand the dark side of the view-point would tend to portray the picture in all dark colours only to give a darker vision tarnishing the realities. This pessimistic approach would further blur his vision and present pictures of distorted appearance as when seen through more and more powerful lenses. Though the objects remain the same they appear to be different to different people of differently affected eye sights. The corrective or the right course of correct appreciation lies not in finding the faults of the objects but in setting his sight defect aright by selecting the right lense of perspective and insight. When he starts viewing the past with corrected sight that rich treasure of hidden troves of gleaming experiences makes its appearance to be claimed by him as his own as its first discoveror but such a treasure would also make its appearance scarce to the one who is blind or who blinds himself by his ignorance or indifference. One may forget the mother-like past as he forgets the nourishment he receives during his child-hood but the mother would never forget to administer her ministrations to her child.

Make hay while the sun shines. Life is short but the art is long. We cannot slow down the progress of the Sun or prolong the day or night to suit our convenience or to be commensurate with our rate of progress. The present is only a passing phase soon drowning itself into the mighty ocean of the past. We should catch up with the fleeting time and abridge the gulf between the past and the future with a golden bridge. Whoever ignores the value of the present must only repent but cannot reap its fruits in the future for good. Hope is the spice of all life without which hope life grows insipid. If hopes are not to be dupes they should be built on a positive and realistic approach. When we plan our future and strive to fulfil the plan with a sense of devotion our past will be magnificent when looked back from any point of time in the future. An ill-spent present will be a poignant memory of the past at which we should keep the doors closed to arrest its demeaning influence and to turn over a new leaf in the life. A well spent present, in contrast, will be a source of inspiration radiating its redeeming influence on the future and rescuing the self from the stinking odours, if any, of the past. Thus he who is young in years may be old in hours if he loses or has lost no time. The only way of enriching our knowledge and wisdom or avoiding a trifling and

frivolous succeeding stage of age is to lay up in our way to it such stores of knowledge and observation as may make us useful and agreeable in the coming stage of age. Diligence makes more durable acquisitions than any inherited fortune and sloth has ruined more nations than any wars. Any wastage of the precious time is no worse than defiantly denying to oneself the opportune opportunities of self-aggrandisement.

What fills everybody's mind with liveliness and love of life is the hope of brighter future. But for this hope many should opt for an abrupt end of life. Life is what we make it and we tend to become what our mental images have habitually pictured us to ourselves as being. We have great potential for success and we can always find ample reasons for our good or bad fortune, or success or failure. For any success or failure it is easy, if one has a mind for it, to trace the failure or success elements within one's personality dominating his thought-pattern. Success or failure most often comes from no circumstances but from the built-in attitude of success or failure following as the shadow of the personality. We have to instill in ourselves self-confidence and self-reliance, pursue the same with enthusiasm and devotion setting our mind on the objective of our life, and seek the attainment by

positive action inspired by positive mind and guarded by the law of conscience. Man's nature is composite, life complicated and society complex. To live in these circumstances we have got to be strong in mind though that seems a bit on the grim side. We are in fact tougher and stronger than what we think we are to meet any situation. Every mind or brain has a creative faculty and it yields when only pressed into service. After all it is proper recognition of our abilities and their use that denotes self-reliance. One can rise from a scrap to the heights of sky-scrapers by the dint of effort associated with self-confidence and self-reliance. Nature allows nothing in her kingdom to take its due and normal course unless it can help itself. Precise thinking and prudent planning discover opportunities in abounding measure even in the midst of difficulties. We have to make opportunities out of adversities but not adversities out of opportunities. The road to success or happiness is not strewn with roses but with temptations digging ditches and trenches all along to pull us into the pitfalls. It is fore-thought and foresight forging forward fortified by fortitude and forbearance that can foretell and forestall the frightful foiling of our fulfilment. Weak minded persons neither contemplate nor undertake any great task for fear of adversities ; mediocre men give up even the task undertaken if confronted with any difficulties but the bold

and self-willed persons carry out the work unmindful of the vicissitudes and hardships, braving and surmounting all opposition and frustrations with a sense of deep devotion and dedication. It is only the last category of persons that builds up traditions and carves out a place for themselves in the annals of the country from which they hail. To be one in that category is a matter of pride, to have a hope of accomplishment in that direction is a source of inspiration and an appreciation of such people or to believe in such people is the beginning of the journey towards the goal, for to believe in the heroic makes heroes.



THE MASTER-KEY TO THE HUMAN GOAL

All streams strive to stride into rivers and the rivers run to reach the mother-Ocean to take rest on its lap. Similarly all people perspiringly pursue all ways and means to attain the stream of happiness and to perpetuate their pleasures. There is no easy and straight road to a happy life, but on that score, no one forsakes his journey or abandons his pursuit. Irrespective of the class or creed, the luck or loathsome lot every person's endeavour is to seize and perpetuate his pleasures. It is unfortunate that no one can achieve this happiness as much as he desires because happiness, beauty and contentment are merely states of minds having their own limitations. Accurate thinking would show that the real happiness does not lie in one's possessions and accomplishments. Happiness is always in sight but just out of reach. You may have anything you want and that thing calls for something else to go with it. It is rather the irony of fate that you no longer want the thing the moment you own and feel it as your own. Thus life is never complete, no matter what you have or how much of it you have. That which is at hand does not satisfy. Anticipation appears to be sweeter than realisation. Thus

happiness, the motive force for all human endeavour, is only a state of mind to be attained and maintained by a balanced judgment and prudently planned pursuits.

The dangers that constantly confront human progress in the present civilisation come from no external sources like wars etc., but from within threateningly menacing the mind more than the body and properties. Of all such dangers to the modern civilisation the one most poisonous brewing up quietly within all the minds with few exceptions, is the sense of pleasure or pleasure-mindedness. The sting of this evil lies not so much in the pleasure itself as in the conscious craving or craze for it. The pitiable part of this pleasure consists in the attainment of the same with no intellectual effort of any sort, individuality or personal initiative. Anything, particularly pleasure that comes of no effort and initiative but as a result of any ready-made means or mechanical process would be quite short-lived and superficial. The present day pleasure is more or less a distraction from worry and weariness demanding no personal participation and intellectual effort of any sort. In the past, unlike the present, people indulged themselves with certain intellectual effort in the arts and the like, like music, dance, dramas, sports as substitutes of which we have now ready-made means like gramophone, radio, cinema,

television etc. When the people of the past had pleasures intelligent and lively entertaining themselves by their own efforts we have now varied effortless-distractions demanding no more than a drain of the purse, prudence and providence. These superficial pleasures and the consequent ease of the mind and body sought to be maintained through self-intoxication all through the life, tend to become sickning and make the life monotonous. The pleasure-mindedness fills the mind with desires ever multiplying by more and more fulfilment and at the same time rendering the mind and senses more and more imbecile and ultimately abandons itself in destitution and desolation. The real pleasure is the fruit of some labour or other like rest after work, relaxation after tiresomeness and refreshment in hunger. Any result that has no relation to a sound and steady cause loses its identity in no time like a lightning and anything of enduring nature in the likeness of sun-shine takes its roots in a firm ground. Thus the real pleasure follows as ancillary to and as a concomitant-corollary of the sense of fulfilment. What ensures a steady sense of accomplishment is self-immersion in devotion to duty and lively worship of work.

It is in the nature of things that good makes good and that anything that comes of evil begets

only evil. Any fortune or pleasure built up on any evil or through evil pursuits, is only a time-bomb to explode and expose itself in time. If your happiness is to be of enduring nature it shall have your good sense as the basic foundation for all future, and the mansion of virtue as the sanctuary to protect you from all wind and rain; sun and storm. Right conduct or righteous path is the only surest way of progress to the attainment of this goal. No pleasure can be secure and no fulfilment can be permanent unless built upon truth and justice. To this end of bettering oneself every one must, not only in his own interests but also in the interests of the society at large, devise ways and means of making headway in the right direction in the voyage of life. Self-introspection is the first step of this process. An impartial and dispassionate assessment of one's own weaknesses, inclinations, tendencies, temptations and the like give us an insight suggesting to our wisdom the remedial measures for right redressal. It is at this stage all faltering of the people in filtering the good from the bad arises out of self-conceit, dogmatic bias, preconceived and fixed notions and lop-sided attitude cumulatively culminating in conceited complacency. The major weakness of people in forming opinions and convictions without the study of the relevant facts and figures as the basis, should be overcome as that method of resistance

supported by contempt, presumptuousness and presupposition prior to examination of the factors, defy the sources of information, disregard the logic of any argument or force of persuasion and perpetuate ignorance. This self-complacent approach through the law of habit has been shaping the individual personality. It is the destructive and deleterious use of this law of habit that has spelt disaster and degeneracy in the lot of the majority of the people all over the world. A habit is a mental path over which our actions travelled for some time. The best and the surest way in which old habits can be got over is to cultivate new habits to counteract, overshadow and replace the undesirable ones. To this end we must voluntarily and by force, if necessary, direct our efforts and thoughts along a desired line until we have formed the habit that will harmonise us with our purpose and continue to direct our efforts along the same line. No man can control others unless he first controls himself. This control of oneself consists in the power to control one's thoughts and make them do his bidding. Such self-control is the balance-wheel in the watch of his life directing and regulating all his actions and energies constructively. This self-control is the major force in the attainment of wisdom pointing to success in vision. Nothing can bring you success but yourself. The man who actually knows just what

he wants in life, can be deemed to have gone a long way towards attaining it. Any wise man if asked as to what he desires, would more than likely say "more wisdom". Wisdom means right use of knowledge implying balanced judgment reflecting a balanced mind.

With wisdom as your own guide you have to array all the positive and negative forces within your own mind on either side to assess the relative strength of the enemy forces. As the negative forces prove fatal to the survival, progress and productivity of the positive you must supplant the negative, one by one, by constant effort. This is not easy in the initial stages as those negative forces would appear to be as formidable as a dense forest of wild growth defying all attempts of penetration. The long cultivated habits like smoking, coffee, gambling, drinking etc. have become so conventional that they no longer seem to be evils of the society. It is only the person that kept himself at a distance from them, alone knows the difference they make in life. You seldom realise the evil effects of any evil so long as you are a fiend of it. Break its shackles, free yourself completely from it and then gauge the relief by the difference it makes in your life. It is palpably fallacious to ignore deliberately such evils as of so trivial nature as not to affect much in life. Such things quite apart, even small

and minor things and matters count very much and go a long way in life. No evil is too small to shatter your personality. A man's character better manifests itself in such small and minor things. We cannot judge a person by any of great deeds he does because such great deeds are intended to be great to the public notice. Great people become great by virtue of the scrupulous and meticulous care they take even in their ordinary affairs of day to day living. It is not out of place to adumbrate the adage that even the mighty ocean is made up of little drops. What attracts indifference and neglect to such seemingly minor things, is the weakness of purpose, or rather want of definiteness of purpose, coupled with an underestimate of the influence and repercussions of such ordinary and minor matters. Weak purpose weakens the will-power, slackens the steadfastness and drives in despondence. Until a definite purpose is set before the mind the energies are dissipated and thoughts are spread over so many subjects and in so many different directions leading to indecision and further weakness of purpose. Weak purpose is the first step of all failure and the way to inactivity and dreariness. It is most saddening to note that the majority of the people in the world are drifting aimlessly through life with no definite objectives towards which they can endeavour and utilise their aptitudes. Life is not a goblet to be

aimlessly emptied but it is a measure to be faithfully filled by individual effort towards a set-goal. The happy person is the one who dreams of heights of achievement that are unattained for which initiative is the pass-key to open the door to opportunity. Nothing is impossible (within the limits of reason) to the fertile mind in which the creeper-plant of chief aim of life is firmly planted to creep to the nearby supporting post or trellis of self confidence, watered with enthusiasm and determination and fed and fertilised with positive action. So to start with you should set your mind on a definite purpose of reaching the full heights of your life, take a resolve not to budge an inch from that firm stand and then set yourself to the task of accomplishing the same. You should not make any allowance for any of the weaknesses which you want to banish, for no evil is too small to hamper your progress. With positive action making rapid strides as you advance and making steady progress you will start believing in yourself, thereby paving the way for more and more self-confidence in due course. Then the will power with enthusiasm hand in hand renders the impossible possible and the formidable feasible. Any one can start but the competent alone can complete. A self-willed man can do anything he believes that he can and if the going gets tough he would let the tough get going. Success is the development of the power with

which one is to get whatever he wants in life without interfering with the rights of others or transgressing the limits of propriety. Thus all happiness is the accomplishment of those who put in strenuous effort as long as necessary sifting the grain from the chaff, harmonise the bodily actions with mental faculties under the supervision of the sovereign conscience and enjoy the happiness, the fruit of his labour, as the natural reaction of the harmonious actions of all the faculties within.



“Oh! Nature, the respository of both Rights and Duties all ;
Right for thou to demand our reverence to them both,
For, it is never thy nature to betray the heart that loveth
thee;”

—AUTHOR

THE PLACE OF ETHICS

Various branches of science like physics, chemistry, mathematics and mechanics have changed the very face of the Earth agreeably taking us by surprise. But it is a pity that man himself, his will and his character seem to have remained unchanged, or rather changed for the worse. All life is now a complex besides being a paradox. We are rich in mechanisms but poor in purposes. Human conduct and convictions are now undergoing swift transformations in a manner more dreadfully disturbing, drastically demeaning and devouringly devastating, than tending towards any real progress worth the name. The rate, complexity and variety of change in our time, are without precedent or parallel in the annals of the past history of the world. The transition from agriculture to industry, from the village to the town and from the town to the city, has elevated science, debased art, liberated thought in all fields such as political, economic and social, emancipated woman, destroyed austerity with luxuries and broken down the old moral code taking away from us the most cherished possessions like contentment, peace and poise and giving us in exchange mechanical and materialis-

tic philosophy of life. In the midst of diversified knowledge and unprecedented power we are uncertain of our purposes, our values and our goals, and more than all we have lost total perspective. Every one knows his part but is ignorant of or indifferent to the purport of it in the play. All this is suggestive of the question as to whether there is any likelihood of our being able to mould ourselves into something better than what and how we are. We have to seek the causes and forecast the results of our changing morals, lowered tastes and loosened love. We have to question the quality of progress and weigh the destiny of our civilisation. The answer thereto, we get not from any branch of science but from philosophy which may be defined as an organised knowledge making a harmonious life. Knowledge may be power but the true wisdom which alone is liberty, lies in the realm of ethics or moral philosophy.

The art of life is higher in sublimity than the life of any art. Ethics is the doctrine of the art of life. It poses and answers several questions to intensify the insight into the subtleties of life. These are the questions to name a few. What is the best life after all? Of what good is goodness? What right is there in power? Is pleasure the aim of life? What is justice and what does justice say of our scientific

world? Religion enters the arena when all other debates are stilled. Theology is the study of supernatural beings and their relationship with man. It mainly concerns itself with the questions of immortality and God. If there is any force or power governing this universe philosophy seeks to know and understand it and reverently work with it ; if there is none philosophy tries to know that too and face it without fear.

It is a well accepted law that every life comes from a living thing like egg from an egg and living cell from another or some other cells. In a fragment of living protoplasm there are many characteristics and much of heredity and complicated future. The climax of such living organism reaches the zenith of our thrill when we begin to know the evolution and functioning of the human mind. This mind is the centre of all activity in the human organism and we are able to get on by the inter-action of our body and mind. Of all the minds in all the living organisms the human mind tops the list in the order of rationality or intellect. Wisdom lies in using this rare gift to the best of its ability for our utmost benefit, but not abusing the same to our detriment and debasement.

Man is a social creature with Nature as his life-giver, saviour and protector. By virtue of

this nature he has to regulate his conduct in such a way as to be in harmony with the interests of all others or, at least, the majority of them in any community. This necessitates adherence to a code of conduct on the part of all the individuals. The observance of the values and virtues enjoined by such code of conduct tends to mould the individual character towards the desired end. The present set-up of society and the social order warrant and call for reconstruction of character at once. But here we encounter some subtle impediments. Some of us do not agree to change our characters labouring under the impression that we are very perfect in the choice of our pursuits, that we hardly commit faults and that no reconstruction of our character is necessary. To understand the demands of the day in this regard we have to analyse the forces that go to make up character and govern the human progress.

Nature has placed mankind under the governance of two sovereign masters, pleasure and pain. Happiness is the sole end of all human actions. But man's duty consists in attaining high qualities and exalted pleasures. Man's life is a conglomeration of good and evil; attractions and distractions; virtues and temptations. Depending upon his inclinations and dispositions tending towards good or evil he

either sees the light or stands in his own light by the nature of his choice one way or the other. In the process of attaining the avowed goal we have to seek health and strength first as any feeble body is prone to be deficient in instincts and impulses for any activity. Proper diet and good habits make for a sound physique. The ideal career would combine physical with mental activity. Then we have to look for intellectual enrichment. For that matter it is better to listen to greatness which we can find in abundance in books, than to be in the midst dictating to fools. Studies serve for delight, for ornament and for ability. These are the external factors capable of preparing the ground before we look within us. The internal analysis takes us to the understanding of the basic factors.

Man's nature is primarily governed by the "Strength of Will" which is the sum and substance of all functioning impulses and dispositions. Will which is unified desire, is the characteristic of growing life. If we wish to be strong, we must first choose our goal and plot our road. If we cannot find a co-ordinating goal, some master purpose to which we will readily sacrifice every other desire of our heart, unity of our purpose will give way to distraction, disruption and dissipation. It is the weakness and the indefiniteness of purpose leading to an

aimless life that shatters the personality. The strongest passions driven by positive motive forces make the strongest man. Reason's healthy function is to serve as an aid to action. In the end character is a completely fashioned or perfectly moulded Will. The whole essence of moral life is the true harmony between internal and external relations. A man of good character is one in whom the domain of duty habitually predominates. Morality presents itself as obedience to the Law of Duty. The good character necessarily expresses itself in good acts of Will. For good character training of the Will under the law of habit is essential. The main thing in the moral life is the establishment of good habits. Habits which have moral significance are habits of deliberate choice. Man's evolution is linked up with his conscious effort. We must act not with the hope of reward but for the sake and love of what is good and right in itself. That alone is the right approach to the desired result. In order to choose the right we must know the right and to develop it into habit and build it up into our nature we must have strength of Will undeviatingly adhering to Truth, honesty and definite purpose.



PART II

THE MYTH OF MYTHOLOGY

As the medium of carrying into effect the religious doctrines of the old ages mythology or myths were evolved for illustrating instructions to the common men with a view to inculcate the spirit of emulation. Just as any author cannot help incorporating his own sentiments and common convictions into his literary piece of work those myths of the old ages could not ignore such basic conceptions and convictions which were then quite consistent and convincing for their standard of intelligence. Thus it started with the conception of Sun, Moon and Earth as Deities, later bringing within its sweep all animate objects as incarnations of God or Goddess. In the world the Gods, Semi-Gods and the Goddesses multiplied in number at such a rate as to reach thousands in the aggregate. The multitude of man-made gods and their ludicrous roles have become a laughing-stock. To name a few the Indian and Greek myths bear an eloquent testimony to this element of fiction looming large and knowing no bounds. Is it not a travesty of truth to insist on such objects being taken for Gods and Goddesses when to disprove the same there are landmarks like landing of people on the surface of

the Moon. Moreover in the face of well recognised conception that God is only one and not many does it not amount to under-rating the potency and perfection of the Almighty when so many others are incredibly indugated with all imperfections about them. Our conception of God should not be tainted with any impurity or imperfection in any aspect about Him. Man is prone to justify any weakness, draw-back or temptation within himself if anything of that sort can rightly be traced to God also for comparison. For that matter why of God, even a bad example of a superior is sufficient to demoralise the sub-ordinates. Thus all the mythology with no efficacy of its own can be characterised as the religious sentiment growing wild and as one of disservice to society deserving an outright deprecation.



“What makes us noble, is our virtue but not birth
And what talent the birth brings, the virtue brightens up.”

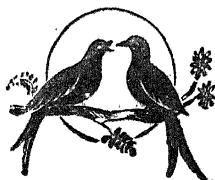
—AUTHOR

SCIENCE AND PHILOSOPHY

All knowledge is of two kinds ; the one that concerns itself with the outward properties or attributes of things as perceived by the senses and the intellect, i.e., the knowledge of the phenomenon within the sphere of science and the other that deals with the inner nature, the underlying reality or the essence of the things in the domain of philosophy. The word, philosophy, etymologically stands for love and wisdom and means ultimately love of wisdom. Love is a unifying and harmonising force always seeking points of agreement and integration. Wisdom is knowledge in general and knowledge of virtues in particular. True knowledge leads us to the path of rectitude and righteousness at the same time helping us overcome evil and evil influences. Philosophy propounds not only a view of life but also a way of living and thus it is a thought stimuli. Theoretically it helps in the understanding of the Universe and its governing forces in their relation to the ends of life. Science and philosophy stand to human body in the relation of its mind and heart. The former develops the intellect and the latter strengthens the heart. The mind and the science

make for a healthy living while the heart and philosophy make for an integrated life. Just as the co-ordinated functioning of both mind and heart is indispensable for a good physique so also science and philosophy should assist each other in bringing about a disciplined civilisation. Some ignorant people of the present and past have looked upon science and philosophy as opposed to each other thinking that the science attempts to disprove what the religion and philosophy seek to establish. This is a sheer misconception of the scope of each of the subjects. Science reveals the underlying truths governing the laws of action and reaction; cause and effect in the creation and control of matter and energy whereas philosophy enunciates and expounds expertly the relevance and the relativity of those matter and energy on one hand and the spirit and Divinity on the other. These two subjects are mutually supplemental but not antagonistic. While science propounds the potentialities the other philosophy propagates the propelling propensities with a view to build up triangular harmony of thought, word and deed. If the science is a horse the other is its reins. Science supplies needs and the other regulates their use. With the help of science man creates for himself artificial wants, unnatural hunger and low tastes and sickens himself with unhealthy selfishness or pestilential discontent and it is the philosophy

that makes men purer, gentler and more forbearing for a wiser and more contented living. It is harnessing of the both that gives rise to perfection and harmony in the social living. No body's knowledge, nay, no body's life would be complete or perfect without, at least, some rudimentary philosophy which is otherwise known as basic thought stimuli. Creative scientists know that the true laboratory is the mind where behind illusions they uncover the laws of truth. For the best results in the present day religion and philosophy should become more scientific and rationalised; and science more philosophic and spiritualised.



Of the lowly, to err is human but,
To persist in and perpetuate is beastly;
Of the highly, virtue is divine but,
Cherishing and nourishing it is barely human.

-AUTHOR

RELIGION AND ITS PLACE

The real religion is one of universal significance and application though its versions may be many portraying different approaches to reach the same goal. Religion is a way of life conforming to a code of conduct based on cardinal truths. It is related to high ideals representing a high moral standard and opposed to all temptations which are in the forms of some pain to be avoided or some pleasure to be secured. It reorientates man to live in perfect equanimity in all possible exigencies of existence. Thus the discipline of religion and philosophy constitutes the science of life. Loyalty to religion requisites unflinching faith in God, adherence to Truth and promotion of the spirit. A true religionist makes steady headway with his eyes always looking forward with no retreat from the well-set path. The main driving force and the invigorating inspiration which sustain his zealous pursuit, draw their strength from his implicit faith in the Divinity. Any religious pursuit without this faith is an empty drum making more naughty and nauseous noise than vouching verily vivacious voice in the right direction. Religion without faith is as much defunct and deleterious as a putrefying

dead body. Thus a living faith is the throb of life for all religion and the greater this faith the stronger will be the zeal in devotion.

Faith is faithful conviction entertained and pursued with all fervid heart and soul in it. It admits of no doubt and distrust and is far more than opinion, impression, belief and conviction. All those put together would not equal faith. The latter may contain any one or all of the former in itself but the former either individually or aggregately cannot contain the latter. Thus what most of the people now have is not faith in God but one or other of the other elements. A firm faith would deride any disagreement and digression and anything incompatible therewith brushes itself aside as an alien element. It is only half-hearted faith which is hardly faith in reality or worth the name in the religious conception, that drives a wedge into the religious fervour and brings about weak, wavering and way-ward approach. What every one with rare exceptions has in his mind usually is an opinion that God must be there as the Creator and Protector of the Universe. This opinion being one neither deep-rooted nor well-founded, oscilates indefinitely and capreciously prompting the zealot to abandon all thought about God if it enures to his benefit under any circumstances and to fortify his opinion looking to Divine grace if the accomplish-

ment of any desired object or any favour appears either formidable or remotely possible. Eternity looks grander and kinder if time grows meaner and more hostile. Thus in religious cloak he is turning out to be an unscrupulous opportunist. If such opinion which is the shaky bed for the religious plant, ripens into belief, later into conviction, so on and so forth on its way to the real faith the approach solidifies steering its path clear of all distractions and distracts. So long as the faithful faith does not descend upon the mental frame it seeks shelter under shabby shadows and hankers after or harps upon hovering hallucinations. This faith is two-fold, acquired or inherited. An acquired faith springs from wisdom and enlightenment while the inherited faith emanates from environment, emulation and heredity. The former is always more welcome and reliable as it is the outcome of erudition and enlightenment.

The next ingredient, Truth stands for greater significance than the truth which is in its literal sense distinguishable from falsehood. The truth in its literal sense comprises only a part or an aspect of the significance of the greater Truth. Even in this limited sense it covers a good range of religious domain and constitutes the core of all rectitude and righteousness. While truth is akin to a commandment engraved or carved out

on a hard rock falsehood is an inscription on sand. While truth is a sustaining force the other undermines and shatters to shambles any edifice of human effort. None but cowards would lie. Falsehoods not only disagree with truths but usually quarrel among themselves. Uttering of lies requires good memory. No man can build up his career on any tissue of lies and every lie in that process would leave a rent on his fortress as a mark of identity for the assailant to aim at as a vulnerable point. This falsehood is the offspring of the fear of taking the bull by the horns or the desire to reap undue and quick benefits by any short-cut or dubious method or means. It really requires courage to meet any danger or adversity squarely or even to confess one's own fault or guilt. This courage emblodens the man to surmount the adversities and extract the most even from such ordeals by turning them to his advantage. No loss in the material gains is as much as the loss of heart in any situation. The greatest test of courage on the earth is to bear defeat without losing heart. He who fears to encounter an adversity cannot expect to obtain any desired result, for every noble action is attended with risks. What people lack is not strength but the will for that matter. We may be as good as we please if be please to be good. While truthfulness is a tonic of the heart falsehood is its disease. No wise-man would ever look to the

Demon of falsehood for a helping hand even when he is to get out of the devilish hands but a liar would try to take sound slumbers in the arms of such Demon. Nothing is worth owning when it owes its being to any lie. No lie can secure any sense of security or sense of accomplishment nor should truth ever be feared to mar or undermine the attainment of the ultimate in any event. Truth is the friend in need and indeed but any lie is an enemy spy in your camp. No lie can sustain itself, for one lie makes many in a bid to gloss over the same untruth. Truthfulness is a genuine ornament but falsehood is a spurious gold ready to appear in its true colours when touched on any touch-stone. For all such reasons and more religion looked upon all lies as sinful. At times truth may be the hardest thing to believe but it is the safest ground to tread upon. Falsehood may be the easiest recourse but it is the most fragile fulfilment. Evil may often triumph but it never conquers. Victory is the usual reward of the former while virtual vanishment would be the lot of the latter. No liar can be a judicious judge of himself. Where truth promotes fortitude, forbearance and up-rightness the falsehood ushers in timidity, impatience and insincerity. Where the former widely opens the doors of the distant horizons for magnificent uplift the latter closes all the doors and confines the one to the dungeon of one's own making.

The Truth in the wider sense is all-comprehensive and represents one aspect of God. God Himself is Truth in the sense that Truth is as eternal and omnipresent as God Himself. All the rest is a cosmic delusion or "Maya". In the light of this conception God is omnipresent and the entire Universe is in him and at the same time he is in the entire Universe. God alone is permanent and unchanging while all the rest is impermanent and ever changing. In all this change and diversity Truth (otherwise known as Paramatman and Atman) permeates and pervades unaffected and without any change or division. This awareness of the Truth would help the seeker find the realisation of the Eternal and Ultimate when pursued with undeviating adherence.

The last in the religious life is the consciousness of spirit. The spirit, purified Self or Soul (Atman) are all one and the same in denotation. Self as conceived in the religious sphere is different from the one which literally stands for one's own person, one's personal interest or selfishness. we are now here concerned with the Self in the religious spirit. The highest wisdom is to know the Self. To know oneself is to know all we can know and all we need to know. Self is the primal spirit, pure awareness which is distinct from bodily states and mental happenings. The Self may be assumed to be that which remains iden-

tical in the varied experiences of life. The Self is the silent eternal witness, a light which no power can extinguish and whose attributes are truth and beauty, peace and wisdom. Our true being is that which we do not perceive on account of the cloud of ignorance that covers our eyes. The test of authentic spiritual insight is an increased integration of the personal life, quickened sensibility, heightened power and universal tenderness. This self when founded and enshrined on wisdom, becomes holy. Holiness is known by the happiness it sheds.

In the process of self-realisation the three stages which are quite recognised though not clearly marked off as distinct stages for religious discipline, are purification, concentration and identification. They are not successive steps but different points of view. The first stage which is an essential prerequisite for spiritual insight, consists in the ethical preparation. Absence of wordly cares and desires and pre-occupation with divine thoughts are indispensable for spiritual life. This insists on withdrawal of senses from the objects and putting to rest the common distractions like sensuality, avarice, envy and sloth as a beginning of the mental discipline. The next stage is concentration which is possible by the mastery of the mind and senses. This concentration which consists in the control of the will

and attention involves chaining of the monkey-like mind to a single object i. e. God. Lastly identification with the supreme is not a process but more a realisation of certain awareness, a rapture beyond joy, a knowledge beyond reason, a sensation more intense than that of life and infinite in peace and harmony. Wisdom of this sort is not cheaply won but achieved through hard sacrifice and discipline, through the endurance of conflict and pain. An inward change after the above fashion must embrace the whole of our nature, thought, feeling and will. This process of vital realisation of God is not a comfortable one for those of us who are given to the delights of flesh and love of visible things. Our soul sedulously shrouded in mystery and doubt is as far away from the highest stage of identification or amalgamation with the Supreme, as the earth from the celestial sky. Men with no wings of spiritual efficacy can hardly flutter to any height from the base-earth. Any pursuit by such men towards such an end is like running after a distant mirage to quench their thirst.

The cravings of the body, the emotions of the mind and the convictions of the intellect pull in different directions making a human being the battle field for all discordant forces thereby dissipating his energy and shattering his spirit. The effect of internal maladjustment of body,

mind and intellect is a shattering of all personality. Happiness is possible only in proportion to the amount of integration gained within oneself. The individual who secured internal integration has no difficulty in adjusting himself to his environment, social, economic or political. The process of self integration requires subordination of the lower nature of man to the higher in order that the animal qualities in us gradually get atrophied through disuse. This internal integration to be in keeping with the times should be as much in the minimum as only necessary to make the life worth living, a living model for others to emulate and attainable by the majority. Orthodox religion is the soul's attitude, response and adjustment in the presence of the supreme realities of the transcendent order whereas ethics deal with the right adjustment of life on earth, especially in human society. Both are motivated by a desire to live in the light of ideals but it is the latter that is now practicable and primarily feasible. Religion as a way of life is the seeking of the Eternal. It is more behaviour than belief. Behaviour is a mirror in which everyone displays his image. The integrity of man must be measured by his conduct but not by his professions. His actions are the best interpreters of his thoughts. All that glitters is not gold and he who makes the fairest show, means most deceit. If we really believe in God we must act in the light of that

faith but not in derogation thereof. If we were to go only half way or play the dual role inspired neither by truth nor governed by faith, it would be better not to go at all. Accepting such demands which are far above the standards of our present generation and pretending to be religious and God fearing, is far more tragic than outright rejecting. How many are there in the present society to measure up to that requirement? is a question calling for correct appreciation and dispassionate assessment.

“How idle is the idol- Worship?
When no ideal stands behind that idol.”



“What the wicked waive as of no weight
Is the character without which the wise never survive.”

—AUTHOR

RELIGION AND PHILOSOPHY

All religions have in their core the creation of universal love and love of virtue based on cardinal truths. Worship of God implies worship of virtues the embodiment of which in all perfection is God. God is love; God is Truth; God is all virtue. All worship must flow from the fountains of love, compassion and sympathy. When such universal love is all pervading there would be no place for fear of evil, fear of poverty and fear of frustration. All fear becomes alien. Religion is the conquest of fear, the antedote to failure and death. True freedom from fear can be attained only by wisdom. So long as religions themselves are expressions of fear the security and protection they afford us are purchased at a terrible price and end in distorting human life. But all worship in our days is necessitated or motivated by fear of evil, love of splendour and luring attachment to senses and possessions. It is the fear of some divine and supreme power that keeps us in obedience. This virtually is an abuse, if not the negation of true worship as all offspring of any fear is a bottomless boon. If we continually practice error we cannot help the wells of the spirit from going dry.

All religions consist in, aim at and must bring about realisation of spirituality, self-realisation and the uplift of the humanity as a whole. When the accomplishment of such results is rendered impossible or remotely possible either by the inefficacy of such religions or the intervention of some other forces, such as social, political or economical the votary of such religion must find some other remedial measures in keeping with the change of times and other factors at work. In the generation past and those earlier religion and its correlated mythology had extensive influence on the outlook and the conduct of the people thereby building up good traditions. The religion could maintain its hold so long as implicit faith and unflinching following were the predominant motive-forces. Religion and philosophy are so inter-woven that one cannot progress without the assistance of the other. Both of them revolve round and hinge upon the conceptions of the Divinity and the human soul which according to Hindu conception are "Paramatman and Atman." Hindu philosophy otherwise known as Vedanta, sets to itself the task of attaining an understanding of absolute Reality and in due course an amalgamation of the Atman with the Paramatman or deliverance from the cycle births. This process of the mystics looks fantastic to agnostics and atheists and presents a formidable task to the votaries in carrying conviction to such minds. Is there any

distinct soul independent of the physical body? is a perpetual question presenting itself from the distant past for an answer free from doubt. This very doubt verily doubting the existence of such an independent soul sets off indecision, indefiniteness and infidelity, shakes off the conviction reverberating within oneself and slackens the stead-fastness in the approach. This doubt and divine faith may be likened to a pair of bullocks each trying to pull the yoke off the other. The greater the disharmony and the stronger the conflict between the two the lesser and weaker will be the faith in all religion and religious philosophy.

The present society with people who are destitute of any faithful faith having come under the sway of mechanical and materialistic philosophy of life, is facing a spiritual crisis calling for a fitting solution. A healthy and progressive religion which creatively responds to the challenge of the present society, is quite desirable. If it fails to so meet the challenge it would tend to be on the decline in such fashion as all the present religions have fallen into disrepute or disuse. Religion must be capable of commanding the voluntary allegiance of all its people or, at least, the majority of them. Practicable religion to stand the test of time, must reckon with the social, economic and political changes and adapt

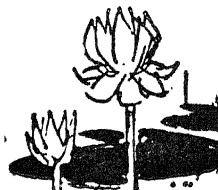
itself to the requirement of the situation to avert its decay and defunction. So the situation resolves itself not into the question whether we need or do not need a religion but into the question as to what kind of religion do we need. Our orthodox or traditional religions with all their rigid and inflexible doctrines still advancing incredible policies and principles, dubious dogmas, outmoded revelations and credulous superstitions, have no place in the present age of humanism. We want a religion which is quite sensitive to the present human ills and social demands. Religion with that perspective alone will serve to deepen the solidarity of human society as the unifying and binding force. But such religion seems to be inconceivable for any society where people have developed a religion of their own with its roots firmly rooted in all types of superstitions, convictions etc. quite opposed to all religious spirit.

By the long efflux of time and with the overgrowth of self of an overwhelming nature the people gradually lost sight of the spirit in all the religious practices which without such soul-like spirit, slipped into the categories of superstitions, dogmas and taboos. Just as any physical body forsaken or deserted by its integral life, would stink in due course of time every religion followed by people with no religious fervour but governed

by superstitions, dogmas and the like, engenders fanaticism, hypocrisy and pretentiousness. Man can understand no eternal Verity until he has freed himself from all pretensions, fanaticism and superstitions. The essence and the only sustaining force of all religions is Truth which is one and indivisible. This truth is as important to religion as the main-spring to a watch and it is the mainstay of all religious faith. If any man seeks for greatness let him forget greatness and ask for Truth and he will find both. Any faith divorced from truth is nothing but hypocrisy and pretence. Now-a-days we see more of religion in the guise, garb and gait but not in the conduct and career of a person. The display of some occult powers, acts of mesmerism, magic and witch-craft are being mistaken for divine powers which would always be found invariably associated with the righteous, devoted and unostentatious. All religion shuns and decries all sorts of vain-glory, pomp and display and a religionist any discord or disdain of truth. The dubious makes a capital of the ignorance of the people unmindful of their welfare or spiritual plight but the real identifies with the victim and the weak and fills the air around with his feelings of love, compassion and sympathy. The present day so-called religionists in their true colours having no love of truth what-so-ever, have come to be more irreligionists in practice and what they have is only a feigned

faith or a pretended faith in the real faith. Purity and excellance of character has very little relation to the religion in the present order of the society. Commercial outlook has come to associate itself with all religious, ethical and charitable affairs and all religion is now more honoured in its abuse than otherwise. These conflicting and contrary faiths bear out the baseness of the human mind in preaching certain things and practising the different or diametrically opposed things while the commercial outlook in a religious cloak perverts and pollutes the fountains of all philanthropy. These traits of human behaviour affording an environment for utter degeneracy and down-fall of the humanity, emanate from lack of faithful faith. Thus all orthodox religion serves no more than giving some psychological solace of one's being dutiful and faithful to God but it is not able to instil in man innate inspiration for all good or to fulfil its avowed objectives in the manner expected of it. It is, therefore, an out-moded media having outlived its purpose and looks now like a square plug in a round hole and vice versa. The need of the day, therefore, is practical philosophy founded not on sophisticated religious doctrines, mysticism or abstract and abstruse philosophy but on practical wisdom enlisting appreciation of the lofty values, spiritual truths and healthy practices. This practical

wisdom should originate from sound reasoning conforming to the natural laws of cause and effect; action and reaction carrying conviction to any average mind. Sublime thinking, high sounding phraseology, unfathomable depths of thought and imagination, and divine intuitions can no longer take the masses into confidence nor inspire faith in them.



"Wise and virtuous vie to render service selfless,
Wicked and crooked only wait to reap the lion's share."

—AUTHOR

RELIGION AND SCIENCE

At the inception most of the religious practices, customs and rituals were based on wholesome scientific truths to suit the times at which they were advanced. To impress upon the people the importance thereof the propagator did not try to explain the relevant factors for appreciation in the scientific background but gave a religious cloak to the scientific truth to attract the attention and adherence of the ignorant and gullible people thereto. To illustrate a few let us take the worship of Tulasi plant by most of Hindu women and offering of cocoanut and camphor flame in temples. The scientific reasons behind them are obvious. Tulasi leaves have some medicinal values and it is an antedote to some of the disorders in women. This plant was named after a fictitious Tulasi with a big story about her chastity etc. Similarly cocoanut water and camphor are destroyers of bacteria in body and air respectively. Such practices based on scientific truths, came to be associated with superstitious beliefs, the real spirit thereof receding into the back-ground. Thus most of the religious practices and rituals have sunk down to the level of superstitions and taboos the regular performance of which is being motivated by the fear of

evil consequences consequent on any omission. This wrong and blind approach coupled with fear complex should be replaced by right thinking and correct appreciation of the intrinsic values of what we do or omit to do. It is labouring under wrong notions that God will be pleased by the performance of such rituals, by recitation of mantras in seclusion or enchantments with no appreciation of the spiritual efficacy thereof. Even assuming that God assumes the responsibility of administering justice to all living bodies in the Universe and that divine power is infinitely greater than that of any human mind it does not stand to reason that God is to enquire into the activities and actions of every individual and other living bodies minute to minute and pass verdicts sitting in judgment. If such a function is to come off as presupposed should not the execution of such decrees of destiny also similarly follow by the operation of the same machinery or some other? This system found itself embodied in Chitragupta according to Hindu conception, the parallels of which can hardly be found in any other religion. Such theory was advanced and propagated in the past because that served to act as the driving force for the then people to act righteously in the hope of divine blessings as rewards for good-deeds and in the fear of being punished for evil or sin. But such conception does not find favour with any logic, reason or prudence.

DEVOTIONAL PURSUITS

All prayer, meditation, yogas and the like were meant to give self-discipline, self-control, self-integration and self-watchfulness. The subjugation and constant control of all desires and passions was the chief aim of all the above means and the achievement thereof was itself a bliss accompanied by self-realisation. Long practice of prayers and meditations develop the faculty of conception to such an extent that the mind can function without the knowledge of senses in such fashion as though the whole body is active with the alertness of all senses though the senses would be in a state of stupor as it were. In this state of mind conceptions and perceptions are more visualised than really experienced, more imagined than felt and more seen through the mental eye than perceived by the physical senses. This mental state may be well compared to a dream by which the dreamer feels the same experiences as in a wakeful state though those experiences are not real. This process of alerting the functions of the mind paralysing the sensitivity of the senses becomes practicable by long concentration or meditation. Such mental gymnasiast or athlete can bring to his mental screen any picture or image of any desired object which he

must have long presented to his mental screen as being. Concentration is the control of the will and attention. To chain the mind which is the repository of forces and cross-forces, claims and counter-claims and attractions and distractions, to any single object is not easy. This is not within the range of majority of the people whose aspirations do not rise above the satiation of the animal desires, nor is it physically and morally feasible in the complexity of life nor a desirable end in the present perplexing society. Whether the perceptibility of God is a reality or a delusion it need not concern any seeker of truth who has to go a long way fighting against all odds in life before he is to entertain sublime thoughts and attainments of the Supreme and every such seeker who pursues the path of righteousness and rectitude as an end in itself, is bound to reap the divine grace as determined by the operation of the Universal laws.

There are some schools of thought entertaining the belief that the destiny of man or any other animate object is determined by the nature of deeds and that the deeds of the present life determine the fate of the next birth. In this process even rational beings may be cursed to take birth as irrational animals by the effects of evil deeds or sins perpetrated by those individuals during their life time and the irrational beings may likewise be promoted to the rational level

by good conduct or "samskara". In this transmigration of souls there appears to be no conceivable standard by which we can arrive at any logical conclusions. If persons are to be cursed with inferior births for bad conduct and sinful life it naturally poses the question as to how the number of persons deserving that fate, is on the increase and as such there should be a steep fall in the world population. It is not convincing to hold that by prayer or meditation or by any other good conduct animals of the lower rank can be elevated to the human level year by year or by any other standard-time because all other living bodies other than human beings, do not seem to have any thought other than that of daily bread or food. To ascribe any more attributes to the mental structure of those animals would be reading too much between the lines. The animals are known to have no more intelligence than instinctive action and that mental standard at any rate is irreconcilable with any rationality which is the main-stay for all discreet thinking and prudent planning. Thus the theory of destiny and transmigration of souls is a far fetched ratiocination neither consistent nor convincing nor credible.

That there are things, elements or spirits to survive the demise or to go far beyond one's existence is a surmise. That the fruits of one's bad

or good deeds (Papa-Punya) are to be enjoyed in the next birth or after death is another conjecture. We make our fortunes and call them fate. This reasoning is all nothing but fertile imagination far fetched and stretched too far and far beyond the circumscribed limits of reason and science. Shallow men believe in luck but strong men in cause and effect. What can be rightly felt, correctly sensed and convincingly reasoned is the unity of purpose in all diversity of creation hedged with and intended to be governed and perpetuated by the Fundamental Universal Laws the operation of which has come down continually unchanged and unaffected by the passage of ages. These laws are inviolable and do not admit of any alteration, modification, moderation, diminution or adulteration and continue indefinitely as long as the Universe continues as designed at the inception not fearing or favouring any inroad or onslaught in their domain. It is by virtue of these laws the movements of Sun, Moon, Earth etc. witness no deviation or swerving despite the efflux of ages nor do we see any change in the working of the laws of cause and effect; action and reaction in any branch of science like chemistry, physics, physiology and geology. If not to these Universal Laws to what else this divine harmony in all the spheres of activity owes its existence and obedience. In the operation of these laws

there is no out of the way courtesy or cruelty as a matter of discretion or discrimination and all actions and reactions must follow the same course as before conforming to the rigidity of those laws. No man can ignore these laws nor can he seek to transgress their limits without the risk of self-effacement. It is in the nature of these laws that all evil should suffer an ignoble death and all virtue should come victorious. It is sheer ignorance to believe that in the present set-up of society or any other set-up that the wicked, vile and venomous reap quicker and better benefits. Such people may grow rich materially but all their riches would be at the cost of their peace of mind and tranquility to reap indigestion and imbalance of mind as the reward of the ill-gotten. Who can have peace of mind when no honest man can look him in the face. No legacy is so rich as honesty. The virtuous derives his pleasures not from his riches but from the richness of his virtues. All evil is incompatible with the laws of the Universe and it shall come out as all dirt finds its exit to the surface through the boiling foam or froth. Any mind of guilt would be full of scorpions. They that know no evil will suspect none and all suspicion is the seat of cowardice and craftiness. Evil may be likened to a bacteria while virtue takes the place of oxygen in the blood of universal laws. When the former is to be dispelled at all costs the latter should be

regularised for the very survival. We must imbibe virtue not in the hope of being rewarded in the next birth or after death but in the faith that the good makes good, the right alone is entitled to respect and right returns and that the life would not be worth living unless righteously lived. Thinking well is wise, planning well is wiser and doing well is wisest and best of all. True blessedness consists in a good life and happy death. Blessed is the man who has no cause to regret his past or fear his future, who lives his life with all the fullness of his heart and who has endeared himself to all by a sense of amiability.

END

“What in plenty the avarice and envy hardly find ;
In dearth find plenty the content and complacence.”

—AUTHOR